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# Theological Magazine

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## Evangelical Synod of North America.



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### THE OFFICE OF THE KEYS

G. NUSSMANN

No one with any historical training will deny that the Bible has left its imprint not only upon the religious life of people who became acquainted with it, but also, upon the physical, mental, moral, and political phases of their existence. If some one ask the question, what tenet of the Bible had wielded the most important influence, the answers would probably vary. Not a few of them, however, would unite in pointing out the teaching of the Office—or, as some express it—the Power of the Keys.

#### CATHOLIC INTERPRETATION

The term Office of the Keys refers to a few passages of the Bible given below in three columns to aid the reader in their comparison:

Matth. 16: 18, 19  
"And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Matth. 18: 18  
"Verily I say unto you, what things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Isa. 22: 22  
"And the key ('duties', Moffat) of the house of David will I lay upon his (Eliakim's, Hilkiah's son's) shoulders; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."

John 20: 21-23  
"Jesus therefore said unto them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he said this he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

The addressee in the first passage is Peter who is given a specific promise by Christ that, as it is commonly interpreted, his posi-

tion would be a unique one. In the second passage and in the words found in the third column all disciples are addressed and made, at least to some extent, corecipients of some of the promises made to Peter.

The contents of the promise may be given in the following manner: to Peter, if not to all Apostles, a certain character is to be imparted through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. If the lower passage in the second column is to serve as a means of interpretation, this character is to be that of a steward, a major-domo, to whom his master has given authority over his household. The task of the Apostle would consist in binding and loosing. These words are figures of speech. In Rabbinical usage 'binding' referred to forbidding, and 'loosing' to allowing. As a householder of the kingdom of heaven Peter could thus use his position in restraining servants under him here, and in granting them liberties there. This interpretation, however, was accepted by only a few. On the other hand, the comparison of the passages in Matthew with the one in John determined for most the meaning of those figurative expressions: to bind means to retain sins, or to withhold forgiveness, and to loose means to remit sins. It was understood then, that to Peter preeminently, and to his successors in the office, the Roman hierarchy, was thus given the power over the final fate of their fellow-men.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE

##### 1. The Period of the Fathers.

a) In the early times of Christianity the congregation as the vessel of the Holy Spirit, under the leadership of its spiritual advisors, was considered the possessor of the power of the keys. So Tertullian and Augustine. Soon, however, the episcopate was reckoned the heir of this Apostolic power, the seat and organ of the Holy Spirit. As the bishop is *sacerdos*, so he is *judex vice Christi*. Cyprian.

In the case of a sinner, a member of the Church, who had committed a mortal sin (idolatry, murder, adultery, etc.), it was expected that he confess voluntarily. If he did not do so, and his sin was known, he was subjected to a judicial procedure, in which by accusation and witness his guilt was determined. If found guilty, he was excommunicated. This excommunication was considered equivalent to the binding of the sin. For a designated time the penitent had to subject himself to certain penances before he could again present himself for reinstatement into membership. By the laying on of hands on the part of the bishop and the clergy, by prayer, and by the kiss of peace by the bishop the excommunicated was again received into Christian communion. In this recon-



ciliation the loosing power of the Church came into action. In its conception in early times, it was coincident with absolution.

Yet absolution here is not to be understood in its later sense. To the Fathers reconciliation was not the work of the Church but caused by the repentance of the penitent and the God of grace who alone was able to forgive sins. The part of the Church was to intercede for the sinner and to restore the penitent to his former position in the Church. Though the power of the Church was in such manner considered limited, Cyprian claimed that "without the Church there is no salvation"—(*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*). Whether the judgment of the Church was correct or not the Day of Judgment would bring to light. We have no formula of absolution belonging to the earliest centuries of the Christian era. But we may not go amiss if we assume that absolution was in form of intercessory prayer. Augustine, e. g., declares the expression: "I forgive sin" as heretical.

b) Jerome advanced another interpretation which was also shared by Pope Gregory the Great. Referring to Lev. 14: 2 he pointed out that the priests of ancient Israel would not make a leper clean or a clean one a leper, but they could distinguish who was clean and who unclean. Since he did not understand that according to Matt. 16: 19 Peter had been given a particular power, he held that the position of the bishops and elders was similar to that of the priests: they were to exercise the judicial power, by which a decision was to be rendered as to whom God had cleansed from his sins and whom not.

From the sixth century on ascetic tendencies gained ever greater foothold in monasteries among Teutonic peoples. Even sins of thought were submitted to severe discipline.—Each believer was to confess at least once a year.

Up to the Carolingian period public and private confessions were clearly differentiated. Public confession was followed by public reconciliation, and private confession by private reconciliation. Public reconciliation was in the hands of the bishop, private in the hands of the presbyters. Formerly reconciliation occurred after completed penance, but, according to Giddas, after a partly completed penance, and according to Boniface, immediately after confession.

During the course of the Middle Ages, public confession and public reconciliation gradually lost ground. Since the days of the Reformation, they have hardly been used.

Alongside with the idea that the priest constitutes the judge who discriminates between clean and unclean we find the conception that the priest is the intercessor and mediator. In the old



Church Leo the Great (440-461) was its great sponsor and advocate. The following is an extract from one of his sermons:

"... A single person, Peter, is appointed from the whole world as a leader in the calling of all peoples, and is placed above all the other apostles and the fathers of the Church. Although there are many priests among the people of God, and many pastors, Peter should of right rule all of those whom Christ himself rules in the first instance. Great and marvelous, my dear brethren, is the participation in its own power which it has pleased the Divine Excellency to grant to this man. And such powers as it granted to other leaders in common with Peter were granted only through Peter. Our Lord, indeed, asked all the apostles what men said of him, but so long as it was left to all to reply, so long was the hesitation of human ignorance clearly displayed. But when the opinion of the apostles was asked, he who was first in apostolic dignity was the first to reply; who when he had answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven";—that is to say, thou art blessed for this reason, for my father has taught thee, neither has mere earthly opinion misled thee, but thou art instructed by a heavenly inspiration. . . . I am the foundation than which none other can be established; yet thou too art a rock (*petra*) because thou art made firm by my strength, so that those things which I have in virtue of my power thou shalt have in common with me by participation. "And upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." . . .

"And he said to the blessed Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The right to this power passed also to the other apostles, and the provisions of the ordinance went forth to all the leaders of the Church. Still it was not in vain that what was made known to all was especially recommended to one. For this power was intrusted especially to Peter, since Peter was placed as a model before all the rulers of the Church. Peter's prerogative remains and everywhere his judgment goes forth in equity. For never is severity too great nor forgiveness too lax where nothing is bound nor loosed except the blessed Peter bind or loose it.

"Just before his passion, which was about to shake the apostles' constancy, the Lord said to Simon, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not: and do thou,

when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren," that you should not enter into temptation. The danger of the temptation to yield to fear was common to all the apostles and all alike needed the aid of divine protection, since the devil desired to confound and ruin them all. Yet the Lord took special care of Peter and prayed especially that Peter might have faith, as if the state of the others would be more secure if the mind of their chief was not overcome. In Peter, therefore, the strength of all was confirmed and the aid of divine grace so ordered that the strength which was granted to Peter by Christ was in turn transmitted through Peter to the apostles."

Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274) rounded out the doctrine of the Power of the Keys. According to him there is a double *clavis*, a *clavis ordinis* and a *clavis jurisdictionis*. The priest receives the *clavis ordinis* at the time of his ordination. By means of it he opens heaven to the sinner through the remission of sins (sacramental absolution). When the Church by means of excommunication and absolution has prepared the sinner for the acception of the full pardon, it has exercised its *clavis jurisdictionis*. The latter may be exercised by archdeacons and papal legates, the former only by ordained priests.

The *clavis ordinis* comes into action in the use of the absolution by the priest. Thomas still holds to the fact, that God alone can save from guilt and eternal punishment if there has been only contrition. But only under the condition that the contrite sinner enter perfect love and evince longing for sacramental repentance and absolution can this forgiveness become complete. When such a sinner enters the confessional the grace of God which he has already received will be increased. Should he, however, lack in anything towards this completion, the *clavis* exercised in the confessional removes all obstacles and prepares the way for the full outflow of God's grace.

Through the *clavis ordinis* temporal punishment may be reduced, but not abrogated, as in baptism. The penitent must further satisfy God and the Church by taking upon himself some penance (prayer, fasting, alms, pilgrimage, etc.). The Church, however, possesses the power, through the *clavis jurisdictionis* by means of indulgences to relieve him of all or part of his penance. As an example, the incestuous Corinthian (1 Cor. 5) may be pointed out whom Paul caused to be excommunicated from the Corinthian Church. When the sinner showed contrition Paul was willing to forgive and to consider his punishment as sufficient so that the way for his reinstatement was open. 2 Cor. 2: 5-11. This indulgence has equal value in the forum of the Church as well as



in the forum of God. Since that which is lacking in the one instance may be supplied from the superabundance of good in another (Christ's, the saints'), the idea of vicarious satisfaction may not only be applied to the case of living sinners, but also extended into the realm of purgatory.

After quoting the passage (of John) last mentioned at the head of this treatise, James Cardinal Gibbons states the following: "From these words of St. John I draw three important conclusions:

"It follows, first, that the forgiving power was not restricted to the apostles, but extended to their successors in the ministry unto all times and places. . . . .

"It follows, secondly, that forgiveness of sin was ordinarily to be obtained only through the ministry of the Apostles and their successors, just as it was from them that the people were to receive the word of God and the grace of Baptism. The pardoning power was a great prerogative conferred on the Apostles. But what kind of a prerogative would it be if people could always obtain forgiveness by confessing to God secretly in their rooms? How few would have recourse to the Apostles if they could obtain forgiveness on easier terms! God says to his chosen ministers: I give you the keys of My kingdom, that you may dispense the treasures of mercy to repenting sinners. But of what use would it be to give the Apostles the keys of God's treasures for the ransom of sinners, if every sinner could obtain his ransom without applying to the Apostles? . . . . .

"It follows, in the third place, that the power of forgiving sins, on the part of God's minister, involves the obligation of confessing them on the part of the sinner. The priest is not empowered to give absolution to every one indiscriminately. He must exercise the power with judgment and discretion. He must reject the impenitent and absolve the penitent. But how will he judge of the disposition of the sinner unless he knows his sins, and how will the priest know his sins unless they are confessed? Hence, we are not surprised when we read in the Acts that 'Many of them who believed came confessing and declaring their deeds' to the Apostles. Why did they confess their sins unless they were bound to do so? Hence, also we understand why St. John says: 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all iniquity.'" (The Faith of Our Fathers, P. 344.)

As the Roman doctrine of the sacrament of penance stands now, the Priest is no longer merely judge *in foro ecclesiae* like the priest in Old Testament times, who decided whether or not a sinner



has received the grace of God, but a judge *in foro dei*, who decides in the place of God. Thus, his judgment becomes absolute in form—*ego te absolvo*—and in content.

That a priest may commit an error in absolving a sinner who pretends to be penitent is possible and is not denied by the Roman Church. It seems rather an anomaly that an absolute act should be subject to error. But we have observed other incongruities in connection with our study: on the one hand we have a Church which requires perfect repentance on the part of the sinner and accepts an imperfect one; a Church which looses the sinner from eternal punishment, and at the same time binds his conscience with satisfactions; a Church which imposes satisfactions and yet releases them in part or whole through indulgences.

But it is safe to say that the average Catholic layman does not see these inconsistencies. There is no doubt that the pious Catholic will derive spiritual benefit from these institutions of his Church, which as a rule he does not question. He has been taught from childhood on other doctrines which are in close relationship with the one treated above.

*To be concluded.*

## BHAGVAD-GITA

### THE LORD'S SONG

#### PERSONAL GITA CONTACTS

Several months ago a Hindu lawyer sat near my desk and in the course of a conversation pointed to the lampshade and said: "God is in that glass as he is in everything," and referred to the *Gita*.—While sitting out of doors during hot season evenings we heard the contractor from Guzerat who is building several houses here at Parsabhader call together a number of workmen and read to them from the *Gita* late into the night. On a late evangelistic tour we reached a distant small village in the midst of which several dozen smaller and larger mud statues of their gods had been erected for a celebration. In response to my desire to possess one of them they gave me Krishna Bhagwan, chief of the deities, the god of the *Gita*. Later I was going to Raipur and had to wait for the train an hour at Bhatapara. A distinguished old man, a doctor, was lying on his rug on the station platform surrounded by a number of attentive listeners. He was repeating parts of the *Gita* as a priest sings mass. In another village fifteen miles away the malguzar (village headman) asked me to take a picture of his family and relatives. I was ready to do so at six A. M., but in real oriental fashion was kept waiting over an hour. A catechist was sent to inquire and brought the answer that a *Gita*-celebration was taking place in the man's courtyard. They allowed me to enter, asking that I remove my shoes out of respect to the religious ceremony. A Brahmin priest was sitting on a decorated elevated pandal reading to about sixty adults, twenty of whom were women. For half an hour I listened and took several pictures. The priest was reading and explaining the *Gita*. It was the last day of a week's celebration. Four hours each day the Brahmin read to them from the *Gita*. To read and explain the book would require eight days. The ceremony cost the malguzar about 800 rupees. And while gathering notes for this article I could hear the nephew of the above contractor singing to himself with book in hand while walking back and forth on the verandah of the newly completed training school for Bible-women, it was the *Gita*.

#### GITA INFLUENCE

All the above incidents took place the past six months. They not only verified the almost stale phrase that India is very religious (which does not necessarily mean spiritual), but caused me to get out the four different English *Gita* translations from my bookshelf in order to get better acquainted with this poem which has so strongly gripped the imagination and heart of India. At



the same time I scanned several biographies to learn what roll the *Gita* played in the life of prominent Indians. The search was fruitful considering the few books at my disposal.—Vivekananda made it one of his chief drawing cards at the Congress of Religions during the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. This marvelous scholar and orator thus introduced the *Gita* to America;—the Theosophists continue to sponsor its progress.—Even after becoming a Christian N. V. Tilak, the great Christian poet of Maratha, gave lectures on the 'Celestial Song' in the Ahmednager High School. Here he once studied it and the New Testament with an able Brahmin, V. V. Joshi, with the result that the latter also became a Christian and was baptized by him.—Pandita Ramabai memorized it as a girl and recited it to devout worshippers on her long religious search after the True One.—During their many round-table conferences Stanley Jones and Rev. Netram frequently met with its influence.—Sadhu Sundar Singh memorized most of its 700 verses before he was ten years old. In his book "The Search after Reality" he devotes a chapter to a comparison of Krishna, god of the *Gita*, and Christ.

Gandhi's father turned to the *Gita* the last years of his life and read several verses aloud at the time of worship. It so fascinated Gandhi himself that in later life he memorized 13 of the 18 chapters (usually while bathing), considering it to be "an infallible guide of conduct." When suffering from a nervous breakdown in 1922 and thinking death was near he had portions of it read to him daily. One verse, he says, continued to ring in his ears:

"If one ponders on the objects of the sense, there springs attraction;

From attraction grows desire,  
Desire flames to fierce passion,  
Passion breeds recklessness; then the memory—  
All betrayed—lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,  
Till purpose, mind and man are all undone."

Before representatives of the 'Conference of Living Religions of the Empire' in London (1924) Pandit Shankar, representing orthodox Hinduism, said: "If ONE gospel is looked for which all Hindus would accept as their own in preference to all other sacred books that command their nominal homage, it is the *Bhagavad-Gita*."—In 'Temple Bells', a choice selection of readings from Hindu religious literature by Dr. Appasamy one finds twelve taken from the *Gita*, more than from any religious book preceding it.—The great Hindu reform movement under Chaitanya early in the sixteenth century was largely influenced by the *Gita*. Two hun-



dred years later the Ramdasi movement under the influence of the *Gita* arose in Western India.—Rev. C. F. Andrews, than whom India has no greater Christian friend, noted no less than twelve new editions of the book in one year. Mrs. Besant's eight cent bilingual edition (Sanskrit and English) has appeared in its sixth edition, completing 100,000. In 1928 a five dollar edition appeared in London by Dr. Hill. Originally written in Sanskrit it has been translated into practically all vernaculars of India, also English, German and French.—At one time (1886) when the Christian movement gained such impetus in Bengal that orthodox and even liberal Hindus began to fear the results a neo-Krishna movement arose to counteract it. Numerous attempts were made to white-wash Krishna's character as depicted in the Puranas and to place him in the place of Christ, and the *Gita* in the place of the Gospel.—The *Gita* is not monopolized by men. In her "Women of Bengal" Mrs. Urquhard remarks that the *Gita* has become familiar to the bulk of India and has left echoes that one hears in almost every home (especially in Bengal).

#### GITA DAY

Lately new attempts have been made to popularize the *Gita* even more. Strangely enough Hindu scholars claim to have ascertained the day on which the great battle of the Mahabharata war began, namely the day on which Krishna also revealed the *Gita*. The great war took place some time between 1500 and 1000 B. C. In 1929 *Gita*-day was set for Dec. 12th. The *Gita*-organization in Poona has been carrying on considerable propaganda the past six years to make this a great annual festivity throughout India. They advertise that the Hindu Sabha, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophists, Gandhi followers and other Hindu religious organizations all heartily endorse this annual celebration as a worthy tribute to the great influence of the *Gita* in the religious life of India. Last year their committee spent almost 4,000 rupees to create interest in the *Gita*.

#### RAMAYAN

There is another religious epic which vies with the *Gita* for the heart of India, the Ramayan. In North and South India it may receive even more devotion. But the contents are vastly different; the *Gita* is philosophical and metaphysical, the *Ramayan* contains a mass of folklore, stories about Ram and Sita. The former is read more by the 'intelligentia', although not in temples, whereas the latter is heard in temples and read by worshippers of Ram because 'it contains more romance'. In answer to my question, who reads the respective epics most? the Baloda postmaster replied: "Educated people read the *Gita*, and thumb-impression givers (il-

literate who can not sign their names) prefer the *Ramayan*." In the *Gita* one does indeed miss illustrative material, stories, analogy, and facts of every-day life which so touch the heart of *Ramayan* readers. One European scholar calls the *Gita*: "India's supreme attempt to create a Gospel."

#### INCARNATIONS

According to the poem Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, acted as charioteer to Arjuna in the battle and personally delivered the contents of the *Gita* to him. Although the name of Krishna appears very early in Indian religious history Krishna-worship did not begin until perhaps in the seventh century B. C. and took definite form much later when a religious wave began to manifest itself not only in India itself but also in countries to the west. The *Gita* itself was written during a period when Greece, Palestine and Italy, like India, were giving birth to leaders who sought to lead their people to greater spiritual heights. It is interesting to note that their efforts invariably lead to visions of "a coming One" in and through whom their dreams of a better day were to be realized. Isaiah portrayed the suffering servant of God "who shall make many righteous." Plato drew the striking picture of the fate awaiting a perfectly just man; crucifixion. Virgil depicted the vision of a new age to open with the birth of a "Boy" who "shall receive the life of the gods. . . and with his father's virtues shall rule the world at peace" (see Farquhars 'Gita and the Gospel', page 56). Buddhists were expecting the re-appearance of Buddha to put an end to earthly suffering and selfishness. Hinduism came to a similar conclusion through its spokesman, the author of the *Gita*: only a god-incarnate can show the path of deliverance. This doctrine of incarnations did not begin in India before 200 A. D.

Hinduism had traveled a long, dusty road before centering its hope in a personal Krishna. Pre-vedic monotheism, partly reflected in the Vedas, changed to polytheism, this in turn gave way to pantheism of the Brahmanas and Upanishads. These again tended toward monotheism which gradually took the form of theism, concentrated in the *Gita*. Thus it seems to me that the *Bhagavad Gita* is the climax of Indian religious history reached after centuries and centuries of philosophical speculation, religious groping, thinking and longing. Having strayed from monotheism it roamed wistfully and with fear through the jungle of polytheism and pantheism, which never satisfied the heart's deeper desires, until it finally evolved the personal side of a central being, a god upon whom affection and devotion could be lavished. It is the first mile-stone along the wearisome road of searching and seeking at which India halted the past twenty centuries. Here it became



happy and loved to tarry. It had found a trysting place to meet a favored one.

#### KRISHNA

Historical criticism turned its searchlight on Krishna, the favored one, and has removed the halo so far as his 'shady past' is concerned. It is suggested that he was at first the god of a petty black clan of the aboriginal Dravidians. In pictures and statues he is usually given a deep indigo-blue color. Aryan invaders brought him under the sheltering wing of their greater Vishnu, only to have him later become one of his incarnations and identified finally with the eternal Brahmin. Dr. Hill thinks he was one of the many priest-chieftains, held to be demi-divine and finally deified a thousand years after the famous battle took place. We have a similar process going on before our eyes today in the person of Mahatma Gandhi, whose fate would be no different would outside modern influences not hinder it to some extent. Even so countless Indians consider him an 'avatar', an incarnation of a god. The *Gita* encourages such a belief: "Whosoever the law fails and lawlessness uprises. . . . then do I bring myself to bodied birth . . . I come into birth age after age." IV. 7, 8.

Fortunately the *Gita* contains none of the erotic, debasing elements and sentimentality connected with traditional Krishna-lore. These Krishna episodes found in the Puranas and parts of the Mahabharata frequently lead to sensuality. Many modern Hindus are ashamed of them and attempt to spiritualize his sporting escapades.

(NOTE.—Post-Gita literature weaves many incidents and miracles around Krishna which have a strong resemblance to Gospel stories. Lately the 'Freidenker' brought such an article by a Hindu who failed to state the fact that most of them arose after 600 A. D. He also fails to state the difference that whereas Gospel stories and miracles have a spiritual value those ascribed to Krishna are absurdly grotesque and usually interpreted physically and carnally. A closer study reveals the superficial similarity of Krishna-lore. For instance, the *Gita* may let Krishna say: "I am the A of the alphabet," but this has nothing to do with the 'Alpha and Omega' of the N. T. The former refers to the fact that every Hindi word contains either a full vowel 'a' or an unwritten semivowel, or shorter 'a', which means that Krishna permeates the universe.)

#### GITA CONTENTS

The *Gita*, written between 200 B. C. and 200 A. D., and translated for the first time in 1785, forms a complete unit. It is considered by many to be an interpolation, thrust into the much older



Mahabhrata (sixth book) to lend it prestige and religious sanction. It contains 18 chapters (700 verses) which are divided into three sections. The first praises the yoga system, stating however that asceticism and self-mortification of yoga ought to be joined with action and the performing of caste duties. Suppress self and attain that state which enables man to annihilate his own individuality and see God in everything and everything in God, namely by performing yoga (intense concentration of mind on one subject, in this case Krishna, the Supreme Being. Yoga literally means rule, by which one concentrates). In the second section pantheistic Vedanta doctrines are taught. Krishna claims adoration as one with the great universal Spirit Brahma, pervading and constituting the universe. He ascribes to himself such attributes as: Supreme Spirit, Unborn, Eternal, Imperishable, Unknowable, the Way, the Lord, Refuge, Friend, Source of all gods.—The third section contains even more philosophy. It teaches a supreme presiding Spirit and asserts the eternal existence of an original, eternal element and soul, both emanating from the supreme Being. It also maintains the individuality and personality of souls.

The poem is a combination of various philosophical systems combined with a strong portion of 'bhakti', religious devotion and adoration. Prof. Hopkins calls the *Gita* "an ill assorted cabinet of primitive philosophical opinions." Dr. Macnicol says that in it "the streams of old metaphysical religion and popular devotion to a personal God and saviour are united." Prof. Barnett considers "its thoughts confused, its utterances loose and rambling. Its paraded learning shallow and ill-assorted; at rare intervals it breaks out into utterances of deep poetic intensity and thrilling melody, almost always echoes of some Upanishad." And yet, in spite of its contradictions, ramblings and its metaphysics, the *Gita* has won India's heart.

The setting is indeed dramatic. The Kuru (Kaurava) Princes (perhaps Dravidian aborigines) were waging war against the Pandava Princes (perhaps Aryans), one of whom is Arjuna. Strange happenings ushered in the war: "the moon looked like fire, asses were born from cows, horses were born with horns and three legs, women gave birth to monsters." Arjuna requests the God Krishna to be his charioteer. The armies are gathered in battle array ready to strike. Arjuna is completely overcome by the thought of killing, saying: "My limbs fail and my face withers. . . I see no blessing from slaying kinsfolk; though they smite me, I would not smite, even for the sake of an empire." The poem continues: "And he let fall his bow and arrows, for his heart was heavy with sorrow. So was he stricken by compassion and despair, with clouded eyes full of tears." And Arjuna closes his confes-

sion to Krishna: "I will not fight." Then begins the long dialogue between them. Krishna, claiming to be the divine Teacher of the Universe, instructs the saddened Prince. In other words the whole *Gita* is given to Arjuna by a god himself.

#### SOME DOCTRINES

1.—The soul is everlasting and can not be killed,—it merely enters another body. The soul does not work or act, it is not stained even when embodied. XIII. 31.

2.—Pantheism. "Earth, fire, water, etc. are of my material nature." "See me in all things" VI. 30—"I am the taste in the water." VII. 8.

3.—Absorption. "He enters speedily into me." XVIII. 55b.

4.—Transmigration. "The body-dweller puts away outworn bodies and goes to others that are new." II. 22. "Many births of Me and thee have passed." IV. 5.

5.—Caste is strictly advocated. "The four castes were created by me." IV. 13. "There is more happiness in doing one's own (caste-) law without excellence than in doing another's law well." XVIII. 47.

6.—Polytheism. "They that make many offerings to the gods go to the gods." VII. 23.

7.—Salvation by yoga and knowledge, namely knowledge of the essential distinction between soul and non-soul. "The fire of knowledge reduces all actions (and results) to ashes." IV. 37.

8.—Bhakti (loving devotion). "He who at his last hour, when he casts off the body, goes hence remembering me, (through bhakti) goes assuredly into My being." VIII. 5.

9.—Neutral acts stain not. Perform actions without desire or attachment, be neutral, expect neither gain nor loss thereby and the deed does not bind one in any way. Be calm, serene, self-controlled, perfectly tranquil, emancipated from all desire of an action and it is then as a deed not done. Be absolutely indifferent when performing deeds. "Action stains me not, for the fruit of action I have no desire" says Krishna. The cause of rebirth is attachment and desire. Works having no selfish aim do not fetter the soul. Man must learn not to be attracted by the attractive, nor repelled by the repellent. "The learned grieve not" for the dead or the living. Yet Arjuna wonders how he can kill without sinning. Krishna continues: Have no personal interest in the event, fight without passion or desire, anger or hatred, then the activity of slaying forges no bonds which could cause rebirths. When slaying be identified with the God in you through devotion, it is then God in you who performs the deed. (Some men told Hagenstein: "God is cruel, first he makes us sin, then he punishes us for it.")



Arjuna continue to worry about reaping the results of action. How, he asks, can man rid himself of the curse of existence and never be reborn again. He receives the answer: "We who in doing works lays his works on Brahma and puts away attachment is not defiled, as the lotus leaf remains unsoiled in the (dirty) water." V. 10. "I am indifferent to all born beings, hating none, loving none." IX. 29.

This last doctrine is indeed a confusing one. It is a pathetic attempt to frustrate the disturbing 'karma' doctrine with its resulting cycles of rebirths. Yet a contradiction remains. If the soul is not stained by evil, if a man who performs actions without attachment is guiltless, then why must he suffer rebirths? This whole doctrine of 'no responsibility or guilt when actions are free from desire' is surely a "poison administered in honey" (Bishop Caldwell). Here follows an instance of what such a teaching may produce. In his introduction to the book "The Imitation of Krishna" the Hindu author says that: "Krishna treated vice and virtue alike. An action committed without attraction is neither virtuous nor vicious." He is merely stating what Krishna taught in the *Gita*: "Works defile me not." IV. 14.

It also seems to me that this doctrine having saturated India's system so thoroughly it is more easy to understand why we find sin-consciousness so depressingly lacking. To admit a fault, to confess a guilt seems immeasurably more difficult to an Indian than one from the west. Where there is no awareness of guilt and no sense of the holiness of God there one can hardly expect to find repentance or a desire for forgiveness.

#### WHY GITA POPULARITY?

Why then should the *Gita* have won India's heart the past 2,000 years as no other religious book has done? Probable reasons may be stated briefly.

1.—In the *Gita* the impersonal THAT, the Absolute, the Brahma of previous systems changes almost at once to the personal HE (atma, i. e. Spirit) as Lord. cf. Tulsidas' (1600) cry: "The worship of the Impersonal laid no hold of my heart." A theistic, personal God is now offered as an incarnated saviour, even though pantheism and a sprinkling of polytheism lurk in the background. By crystalizing the doctrine of a supreme being incarnated, which up to this time was only very vague, the worshipper is offered personal contact with a personal God. "It is India's cry for an incarnate Saviour." (Holland.)

2.—The *Gita* continued to lead poverty stricken India on the path of 'other-worldliness' and to a contempt of materialism.

3.—It was a peaceful reply and a counteraction to Buddhism which was agnostic, God-less.

4.—It offers the layman a way of life without his necessarily becoming an ascetic or sadhu. The householder is consoled that a life of action can be as acceptable as a life of inaction.

5.—In the *Gita* for the first time in India's history salvation is distinctly brought within reach of the Sudra (low caste) and woman, even though she is declared to be 'born in sin.' Women and low caste people are all permitted to read it. For this reason perhaps the *Gita* was classed as 'smriti'—tradition, and not as 'sruti'—direct revelation, for books of the latter class continued to be forbidden to these two large groups of India's population.

6.—The *Gita* finally holds out more hope to the struggling soul than any previous Hindu religious book: "Have thy mind on Me and thy devotion toward Me. . . so to me shalt thou come." IX. 34. "I lift them up speedily from the ocean of deathly life-wanderings (rebirths) as their mind is laid on me." XII. 7. ". . . Come for refuge to Me alone. I will deliver thee from all sins; grieve not." XVIII. 66.

#### CRITICISM

Of all doctrines in the *Gita* the one of transmigration and 'karma' seems most depressing and hopeless. The rigid law of 'karma' demands that man reap the result of every action, either in this life or in successive rebirths. It not only breeds fear and hopelessness but it has also completely sidetracked the idea of salvation, which becomes not a struggle to be free from evil but free from rebirths. It seems immoral to punish a person in later rebirths for acts in previous births of which he is not in the least conscious. The purpose of punishment is improvement, but this can not be the result when a person is not made aware of the fault for which he is being punished. Even after very good behavior, i. e. devotion to Krishna, man may enjoy the bliss of heaven a thousand years, only to be thrust out again and perhaps be born in a fine family to continue his upward struggle for freedom from rebirths. This stubborn doctrine of 'karma' has ever and always stood in the way of developing the idea of a merciful and forgiving God. In one of his latest books Prof. Radhakrishna of Calcutta tries his utmost to tell us that the law of 'karma' does not exclude the possibility of forgiveness. He fails to convince us. One critic says: "All the *Gita's* lofty heights and inspiring visions of him who 'loves and serves all men' receives a terrible blow when they meet with this intruding doctrine of 'karma' and rebirth." This is the cul-de-sac preventing India's religious progress. It not only breeds a perverted idea of salvation in asking how to evade rebirths,



but also fails to ask: what is holy, what is moral? It breeds hopelessness and uncertainty in the mind of a devoted Hindu, a feeling of fatalism,—for when all merit is exhausted the cycle of rebirths must continue. Union with God is as far off as ever. Hence the poet's cry:

“How many births are past I can not tell;  
How many yet to come, no man can say.  
But this alone I know and know full well,  
That pain and grief embitter all the way.”

A more dangerous and to me objectionable doctrine is the one in which the ‘divine Krishna’ teaches that the soul does not work and can not be stained,—that an unselfish act, performed without attachment is as an act not done at all. A murderer in Poona once walked to the gallows with a copy of the *Gita* under his arm. To him the murder was no crime, he had performed it without attachment and desire. Rev. Hagenstein once saw a sadhu on the streets of Baloda Bazar without a stitch of clothing, a woman stopped him and committed an immoral act with him. Reprimanding him Hagenstein received the reply: “It affects me not, I’m beyond it,—detachment.” In 1914 an anarchistic group of nationalists in Bengal used the *Gita* to justify the murdering of Britishers. (See ‘Modern Religious Movements’, page 364). This is a logical result of the doctrine, XVIII. 17, that a person free from egotism though he slay all the worlds “slayeth not and is not fettered,” i. e. is not bound to suffer rebirths for his actions.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.” In spite of the *Gita*’s 2,000 years of popularity it lacks certain transforming powers. It could not abolish the inequality and injustice of caste; it did not promote widow re-inmarriage, nor did it put an end to the degrading ‘devadasi’ (templegirl) system; it has not abolished polygamy, nor has it suppressed vice; it did not stop widow burning or infanticide; it did not promote popular education; it did not advocate or promote altruism beyond the joint-family circle. One reads the *Gita* in vain to find clearcut teachings regarding the service of all fellowmen, irrespective of class. It may teach the unity and harmony of man with the universe, but it fails to stress any idea of practical brotherhood. Its religion remains individualistic, self-centered: ‘how may I escape rebirths and attain union with the godhead?’ The sadhu, the ascetic, the priest and their followers have directed their efforts to intensive introspection to the exclusion of the welfare of others. Declaring inactivity or actions without desire to be the spiritual ideal the *Gita* could hardly give birth to social reform movements, these arose in India after the advent of Christianity.

Will India continue to halt indefinitely at this first milestone, or will it not be attracted onward to the more worthy lover who stands beckoning at the second milestone, saying: Come unto me all ye who labor for release and are heavy burdened with uncertainty and sad thoughts of endless rebirths; come I will give you rest after your noble search. If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed, for he who hath seen me hath seen God the Father.\*

*M. P. Davis.*

\* Read: "Will India Become Christian" by Rev. J. W. R. Netram; "Christ in the Indian Villages," by Bishops Azariah and Whitehead.



## THE PRAISE OF THEOLOGY\*

A. RITCHIE LOW

I have come to believe that the present flux in our religious thinking can be traced somewhat to the prevailing tendency to belittle theology. Only this summer, at a conference of religious educators, I heard a woman exclaim, "My church has twenty-five articles of belief, but, do you know, I only made the discovery last week!" And to think she has been assisting in the preparation of church school material for about eight years!

Now I would not say that she would have done better work had she been familiar with these articles of belief. However, the thing that impressed me at the time was the fact that, instead of making the confession with some degree of modesty, she actually spoke as if her lack of knowledge were something to be proud of. She was ignorant of her ignorance.

Doctors are never heard talking slightly of medical formulas. Lawyers are not in the habit of belittling Blackstone's commentaries, old as they are. However, with ministers it is different. Anything resembling theology is considered "dry as dust." I am sometimes led to believe that their contempt for the queen of sciences is due to a desire to be considered modern and up to date.

I am quite prepared to believe that some dogmas have outlived their usefulness. But truth is static. A thing is not good merely because it is new nor is it bad because it happens to be old. Some doctrines are true not only because they came from the lips of Jesus, but because they have stood the test of time. If, for instance, I believe the doctrines in the New Testament it is not simply because they are *in* the New Testament, but because they can be re-experienced in our own day and age.

There is little doubt but that much of our ineffectiveness as preachers can be attributed to the fact that there are very few things we really believe with any degree of downright earnestness. Most of us are dreadfully afraid of being considered dogmatic. In the realm of mathematics the teacher does not hesitate to say that two and two are four. But in the realm of theology we prefer to leave the matter in abeyance. Two and two may have made four yesterday, but then one never knows what a day may bring forth.

It is well to have an open mind. However, it is my belief that some questions in the realm of religion may be considered closed. This does not mean that new light may not shine forth from old truths. However, Jesus himself had a closed mind about many things, and that is why he was able to speak with authority

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and not as the scribes, and why he drew all men unto him. For instance, he did not hesitate to declare that if only folk would come to him they would find rest unto their souls. Peter had a closed mind about some things. One has only to read his sermon delivered at Pentecost to discover this. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly," declared this fiery apostle, "that God hath made this Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Paul had an open mind. Yet it was closed in some respects. It was closed so far as the Person of Jesus and who he was were concerned. What he had seen and heard declared he unto the people. The common folk heard Jesus gladly. They listened to Peter and three thousand heeded his call to repentance, and Paul was included in the list of those who were accused of turning the world upside down. But then, all of them spoke with tremendous earnestness and with the solid note of conviction. And all because each one was a whole-hearted believer. Thus their spirit became contagious.

To-day many of us resemble a ship that has left the harbor and is on the high seas. The question comes up: Whither bound? And it goes without saying that we are not going to arrive until we have first determined where we desire to go. The present theological flux is due to there being too many captains on board, each one with his own ideal as to which port it is best to make for. Perhaps if those on board gave the Captain of our Salvation a chance at the wheel more of us would get somewhere.

Our present mental condition does not make for a successful ministry. It may be that our lack of success can be traced to our *inability* to speak with any *note of certainty*. I have gone to conference after conference in the past five years and have heard some of our outstanding Protestant leaders tell their fellow ministers that, after all, we are all of us on a search for truth. "We are all," said one brother, "seekers, seekers anxious to find the way to the Father's house." One young pastor, not long out of the seminary, intimated to me afterwards that it was always his belief that the business of the preacher was to proclaim something he was supposed to have already *found*. "How can I," he asked, "share with my people something I myself do not possess?"

I am prepared to admit that there are some things about the gospel hard to be understood. However, we do not have to wait until they are entirely clear to us before we accept them any more than we have to refrain from using electricity until we have mastered all of its details. There is so much about the life of Jesus, there is so much in the New Testament, that is understandable that we ought not to find it difficult to appropriate their messages.



If some of us live merely on the surface the fault may lie with us in so far as we have not "launched out into the deep" and let the shore lines go. But launching out thus, according to some, involves entering the realm of theology. And is this, they ask, not the very thing we are trying to get away from? Hence the cry: "Let's get away from theology."

It is to smile. Does the scientist endeavor to get away from the law of gravitation? Moreover, those who decry theology are themselves oftentimes dogmatic. Dogmatism can be negative as well as affirmative. "Let's *scrap all creeds*," cries one good brother, thinking that by this method we can rid ourselves of the necessity of having any statement of belief. Yet he himself has a creed, for the things he doesn't believe are as much a creed as are the beliefs of the most ardent fundamentalist. What a Constitution of the United States is to our land, a statement concerning its doctrines is to a church—*something to go by*.

I am sometimes persuaded to believe that the objection to creeds is due not so much to antagonism as to indifference. Where a man has just opinions he is not likely to care a straw about making his weight and influence count either one way or the other. With a man having convictions it is generally otherwise. The former halts between two opinions, one of which he considers just as good as the other. Then again, it may be that some are reluctant to delve into the realm of theology and to admit the necessity for a creed, because this would entail a great deal of mental labor, something which too many of us are anxious to avoid.

My own feeling is that, just as a carpenter needs a kit of tools to properly perform his duties, so does a minister *need to have a working theology*, a philosophy of life. Otherwise he is liable to be shifting with every wind and doctrine. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility of change. I myself have come up from fundamentalism. But while I have rearranged my mental furniture I have not moved out of the building, but have simply added a room or two above the back porch. The foundation, however, is the same old foundation. Without a solid underpinning none of us is ever likely to succeed. A man ought to get up in the pulpit, not because he has to say something, but rather because he has something to say. And he will have, provided he is the possessor of some solid convictions, otherwise, he had better not get up at all. The tragedy of the liberal is that in broadening out he flattens out.

Of course it can not be denied that many people are facing tremendous intellectual difficulties, and certainly help ought to be given them. We are living in an age of mental transition, and

perhaps these are more or less inevitable. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that with the great majority of our people it is in the realm of the emotions rather than in the sphere of the intellect that the greatest battles are fought. Uncertainty and unbelief have no message for such.

When earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away and fast falls the eventide, it is the Words of Eternal Life that they long to hear. It may be that there are those who are masters of their fate and captains of their souls, and are conscious of no such need. However, it is the old, old story as it is revealed in the gospels that revives life in us, gives us a fresh start and imparts new faith. So it seems to me.

My views along certain lines have greatly changed in the past eight years. And the end is not yet. Two things, however, I have never doubted: belief in a God who was like Christ and in a Saviour who is able to mend broken lives, make them wholesome, strong and radiant, in a Christ who can take cords that are broken and make them vibrate once more.

O brothers! If my faith is vain  
If hopes like these betray,

then I shall give up my task of the cure of souls, for without them I could do nothing. But I *know* in whom I have believed and am fully prepared to commit all unto Him. I can join with Emily Dickinson in saying:

I never spoke with God  
Nor visited in Heaven;  
Yet certain am I of the spot  
As if the chart were given.

Let us cling to that which has come down to us across the years. In our desire to be modern and up to date let us not be too hasty to discard the old doctrines that from the beginning of time have been a very present help in time of trouble. I refer, of course, to the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man and the immortality of the soul. The Apostle Paul said that God was able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Why not let us give Him a chance in our lives? "The Church," says John Moore, "is very busy with the fire grates, but rarely kindles a fire." And without a kindled fire there can be no warm hearts. And *warm hearts* are always *better than cold intellects*. Perhaps we shall have advanced the cause for which we strive when, in deep contrition, we pray with David that the Lord will return unto us the joy of His salvation. And with the joy of salvation singing in our hearts we shall then be workmen that need not to be ashamed, fit for the Master's use.



## MERGERS WITHIN DENOMINATIONS

H. L. STREICH

While we are talking and working for mergers of denominations it would be well to give attention to mergers within denominations. Not only do we need fewer denominations, but fewer churches of certain kinds and in certain places. All denominations have too many churches in wrong places. There are numerous small churches that no longer have a right to exist.

In most small towns there are too many churches, each struggling to exist and resorting to all kinds of unworthy and even unchristian means of raising funds. We were recently in a town of 600 with four churches. This can be duplicated most anywhere. This has come from every denomination desirous of being represented in every town. Of course lodges and luncheon clubs are guilty of the same thing. But this should not be true, at least, of the Church of Jesus Christ.

All Protestant denominations report large sums of mission money used for such superfluous churches. Surely this is not doing home mission work? This is but promoting denominationalism, called by Peter Ainslee "The Scandal of the Church." One is not surprised if folks have no interest in such home mission activity and refuse to contribute.

This overchurched condition in small communities makes for unchristian rivalry and envy. The chief activity is: making money to make ends meet. Worse than that, only very small numbers meet to worship and no adequate educational program can be promoted. Room, equipment and teaching force are absent. The smallness of the church makes no appeal to the community, nor makes much of a contribution to the community welfare. We could mention a number of Evangelical churches of this type. In one we found two teachers and about twelve children in Sunday school attending only every two weeks. Yet there is a larger, well organized Evangelical Sunday school near by. Usually these small churches cannot afford a pastor and have services only every two or three weeks. And the pity of it is, they are satisfied with such services. Perhaps if the pastor that thus serves them refused, they would have to merge, which would be to their benefit and blessing.

In rural sections with hard roads there is no longer an excuse for the isolated small church. A distance of four to ten miles today is no farther than one and two miles in the days of our fathers. Indeed it often took them longer to make the one or two miles than it does us to make ten. Why should we then refuse to go the longer distance? We do for commercial and recreational purposes.

Why not for educational, worship and kingdom purposes? Are we less Christian than our fathers?

A recent survey of one of the larger denominations showed that nearly half of the churches had a membership of less than one hundred individual members and more than half of the Sunday school had less than one hundred members. With other churches in the community, can any Christian or even sensible man justify such conditions? Is this not a waste of money for buildings and operation and the waste of a man's time to serve such small groups? No wonder some pastors become lazy with so little to do.

Often it is said that the people are to blame for such conditions. Each group wants a church of its own. Or when dissatisfied in one church, they move a block away and start another church. Occasionally this is unfortunately true. But in most cases the fault lies with the denominational mission board which seems only too anxious to start new churches, perhaps to make a good showing. Wherever there are two or three members of the denominations they feel a church of their kind must be started. As one mission leader told us, "It is our sacred duty to follow our people and provide churches for them." But what if they are few and the community already is overchurched? Is it our sacred duty to merely build churches or the Kingdom of God? Too many churches usually hinder the building of the Kingdom. If denominations would refuse to support such unnecessary churches, they simply could not exist.

Of course such mergers would sometimes mean uniting with another church group. But if we rejoice when a Methodist, a Baptist, a Lutheran joins our church often making much of the fact *that such have joined our church*, may not Evangelicals unite in fellowship with others? In fact they have and do. Think of the thousands of Evangelical who went to other churches during the years we failed to use English in our services. We let them go then. And they felt at home in another church. So now in these mergers of small churches, some will have to do the same.

Some years ago a hurricane destroyed three churches near Columbus, Ohio. None could be rebuilt. So they decided to unite in one church. Dr. Washington Gladden in preaching the dedicatory sermon said, "It took a hurricane to blow these three churches together." One is tempted to pray for more such hurricanes.

In many cases, however, it would only mean uniting two or three churches of the same kind. During the past year two Evangelical churches in each case have merged in Buffalo, N. Y., Scranton, Pa., Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco. This makes not



only for saving of men and money, but, what is more important, for efficiency. Larger churches can provide the equipment and the workers needed for proper performance of present day functions of a church. A number of small Evangelical churches within a reasonable distance of another Evangelical church should seriously consider merging. Economy, regular church services, better Sunday school facilities, closer fellowship and larger Kingdom service demands it.

Three things would greatly help such mergers within denominations: 1) the refusal of denominations to supply such small churches with pastors, rather urging them to unite with nearby churches; 2) withdrawal of missionary support; and 3) refusal of neighboring pastors to serve.

The result would be a blessing to all concerned, and would prove to the world that we really believe in church union. The prayer of Jesus would also be answered, "That they may all be one."

## Moderne, ausserkirchliche Bewegungen.

### 1.

## Okkultismus und Spiritismus.

Von Professor Dr. R. S. Grünmacher.

Die Auseinandersetzung mit außerchristlicher Wissenschaft und Religionsgeschichte, wie sie in den beiden letzten Jahren dieser Zeitschrift vollzogen wurde, ist gewiß für den christlichen Theologen von Bedeutung. Aber er wird verhältnismäßig selten von ihr unmittelbaren Gebrauch machen können, wenn er im praktischen Kirchendienst steht. Disputationen mit Gelehrten sind für ihn selten, und mit Bekennern außerchristlicher Religionen kommt meistens nur der Missionar in Berührung. Dagegen gibt es in vielen Gemeinden Bewegungen, die zwar nicht das Christentum selbst ausdrücklich ablehnen, wohl aber seine kirchliche Verkündigung mit allerlei fremden Bestandteilen mischen, so daß man sie als außerkirchlich bezeichnen kann, auch wenn ihre Anhänger formell innerhalb der Landes- und Freikirchen bleiben. Die genaue Kenntnis solcher Erscheinungen ist für den Praktiker außerordentlich notwendig, und die theologische Wissenschaft hat in noch stärkerem Maße als bisher die Pflicht, auch sie verstehen zu lehren und die Maßstäbe zu ihrer Beurteilung anzudeuten. Aus der Fülle solcher Erscheinungen wählten wir nur die auswählen, welche in der unmittelbaren Gegenwart eine weitere Verbreitung und zwar ebenso in Amerika wie in Europa gefunden haben. Wir behandeln:

1. Okkultismus und Spiritismus.
2. Theosophie.
3. Anthroposophie und Christengemeinschaft.
4. Krishnamurti.
5. Mazdazdan.
6. Christian Science.

### A. Okkultismus.

Hat Goethe die Menschen als ein Geschlecht charakterisiert, das aus dem Dunklen ins Helle strebt, so gilt doch auch umgekehrt, daß in uns allen die Neigung lebt, sich dem Dunklen und Verborgenen, dem Geheimnisvollen, zuzuwenden. Der Sinn für das Geheimnisvolle hat stets in den frühen und unteren Schichten der Menschheit gelebt und ist sonderlich bei denen kräftig geblieben, die abseits von der Kultur in engem Zusammenhang mit einsamer Natur ihr Leben verbringen. Aber es gibt auch ganze Völker, wie das indische und chinesische, in denen solche Neigungen und Gedankengänge bis in die führenden geistigen Gruppen eine Macht sind,



und es treten auch in der abendländischen Geisteswelt Zeiten auf, in welchen sich die Hinwendung zum Geheimnisvollen, zum Okkulten steigert. In solcher Periode befinden wir uns in der Gegenwart wieder; die gewaltigen Erlebnisse unsers Daseins, die seit dem Jahre 1914 fast die ganze Menschheit erschüttert haben, das Schicksal, das über die Welt hereinbrach und alle klugen Berechnungen immer wieder durchkreuzte, haben den Boden gelockert. Infolgedessen sind Okkultismus, Spiritismus, Theosophie, Anthroposophie in der Gegenwart Mächte geworden, die Erkenntnis und Verständnis verlangen und einer Beurteilung mit dem festen Maßstab der christlichen Religionen und Weltanschauung bedürfen.

Für die Entstehung des modernen Okkultismus und Spiritismus ist es nicht leicht, eine einzelne Persönlichkeit und ein charakteristisches Werk zu nennen. Man könnte ins 18. Jahrhundert zu Schwedenborg zurückgehen, in welchem Kant den Repräsentanten eines Geistersehers fand. Nicht minder vermöchte man an die Theorien Jung-Stillings (gest. 1817) zu erinnern. In besonders klassischer Form aber sind die okkultistisch-spiritistischen Erscheinungen beschrieben in Justinus Kernalers (gest. 1862), eines Arztes, Bericht über: „Die Seherin von Prevorst.“ Allein diese europäisch deutschen Erscheinungen stellen doch nicht die unmittelbarsten und einflussreichsten Ahnen des gegenwärtigen Okkultismus und Spiritismus dar. Dieser steht in viel engerem Zusammenhang mit der Ausdeutung von Vorgängen, wie sie sich etwa seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts auf amerikanischem Boden abgespielt haben und dann von Amerikanern, wie A. S. Davis, Franzosen wie Allan Kardec zu einer okkultistisch-spiritistischen Weltanschauung verarbeitet wurden. Sie wurden dann nach Deutschland verpflanzt und haben hier in neuerer Zeit eine besonders die Massen packende Form in einem Roman von A. Dinter „Die Sünde wider Geist“ gefunden.

Zum Okkultismus rechnet man zunächst eine Reihe merkwürdiger physikalischer Erscheinungen. Zu den einfachsten gehört das sogenannte Tischrücken, bei dem sich ein Tisch unter Handauslegen einer Reihe von Anwesenden immer lebhafter bewegt; es geht dann dort zur Beantwortung von Fragen durch diesen Tisch, weiter zum Schreiben des Tisches durch Verbindung mit einem ihm verbundenen Alphabet. Dazu kommen dann Bewegungen lebloser Gegenstände ohne sinnliche Berührung, das Empfangen starker Schläge ohne sichtbare Hand. Besonders Gewicht legt man in okkultistischen Kreisen auf sogenannten Materialisationen, bei denen sich zunächst ein phosphoreszierender Nebel bildet, immer stärker verdichtet, bis „die Erscheinung so plastisch wurde, daß ein leibhafter Mensch vor uns stand.“ Alle diese Erscheinungen hängen mit besonders veranlagten Personen, mit sogenannten Medien zusammen. In zu-

sammenfassenden wissenschaftlichen Darstellungen wird darum der Okkultismus einfach als die Wissenschaft „von dem mediumistischen Phänomen bestimmt.“ Professor Oesterreich behandelt in einem Buch: „Der Okkultismus im modernen Weltbild“ wesentlich nur die von drei bekannten Medien, Helene Smith, der Piper und der Eufapia Palladino hervorgebrachten Erscheinungen. Zu ihnen aber gehören nicht nur die bisher beschriebenen physikalischen, in der sichtbaren oder greifbaren Naturwelt sich abspielenden, Vorgänge, sondern auch eigentümliche geistige Hervorbringungen. Von Miß Piper wird berichtet, daß sie im Tranzustand „oft Mitteilungen über den Namen, den Charakter, die Vergangenheit der Anwesenden, sowie anderer ihr bekannter Personen nicht nur Lebender, sondern auch Verstorbener machte. Es waren immer ganz banale Dinge etwa der Art, wie ein Spazierstock von jemand ausgehen hat. Mit Vorliebe erinnerte sie die Anwesenden an allerlei kleine Begebenheiten aus ihrer Vergangenheit, die ihr sicherlich niemals bekannt geworden waren. Diese Mitteilungen erfolgten besonders dann, wenn Miß Piper Gegenstände aus dem Besitz irgendeiner Person vorgelegt wurden.“ Wir stehen damit bei dem sogenannten Gedankenlesen, mit dem sich auch die Gedankenübertragung verbindet, und zwar geschieht beides auf rein geistigem Weg ohne Vermittlung des Wortes, ohne leibliches Sprechen und Hören. Nimmt man dazu noch die Gabe des Hellsehens, das heißt des Schauens in die räumliche und zeitliche Ferne, das sich besonders auf eintretende Unglücks- und Sterbefälle, sei es nun der eignen oder verwandter, selten ferner stehenden Personen bezieht, so haben wir die hauptsächlichsten, wiederkehrenden und darum typischen Erscheinungen des Okkultismus beschrieben. Negativ können wir diesen definieren: „Unter Okkultismus verstehen wir die Summe unerklärter Vorgänge, die sich in unserer Weltwirklichkeit vollziehen, sich aber den Regeln und Gesetzen des gewöhnlichen natürlichen und geistigen Geschehens nicht einordnen.“

Die erste Frage, die wir den geschilderten Erscheinungen gegenüber erheben müssen, ist naturgemäß die nach ihrer Wirklichkeit und zwar in dem Sinn, ob es tatsächlich solche geheimnisvollen Vorgänge gibt, die sich nicht einfach nur als verschleierte natürliche enthüllen lassen und ihren eigentümlichen Charakter nur durch eine vom Objekt ausgehenden oder im Subjekt wurzelnde Täuschung empfangen haben. Die Beantwortung muß mit der Feststellung einsetzen, daß ein großer Prozentsatz angeblich okkulter Vorgänge durch objektive und subjektive Täuschung und Einbildung entstanden ist. Taschenspieler, die sich selbst als solche ausgeben, machen manche angeblich okkulte Vorgänge wie das Gedankenlesen nach und erklären es aus der Aufmerksamkeit auf verabredete Zeichen oder aus



der Feinhörigkeit gegenüber leise geflüsterten Worten. Eine Reihe anderer Erscheinungen sind fraglos bewusster Betrug und als solcher unzweideutig festgestellt. Trotzdem sind eine Reihe okkulten Vorgänge unter den strengsten wissenschaftlichsten Vorsichtsmaßregeln als wirklich beobachtet und darum von den Vertretern verschiedenster Weltanschauungen anerkannt worden. So erklärt der berühmte Leipziger Philosoph Driesch: „Telepathie und Hellsehen sind Tatsachen. Heute aber kann man auch an der Wirklichkeit der sogenannten physischen Erscheinungen kaum mehr zweifeln.“ Die sich aus diesem Tatbestand ergebende Konsequenz können wir auch mit den Worten von Driesch formulieren: „Hier muß gründliche wissenschaftlich klare Arbeit einsetzen, und zwar bei allen Kulturenationen.“

Diese wissenschaftliche Arbeit fällt einmal den Wissenschaften von den materiellen Vorgängen, das heißt also Naturwissenschaften und Medizin — denn viele Medien sind auch physisch krank und abnorm — dann aber vor allem der Wissenschaft vom seelischen Leben, der Psychologie zu, die einen besondern Zweig, den der „Parapsychologie“ auszubilden begonnen hat. Selbstverständlich wird die Wissenschaft zunächst das Unbekannte in Zusammenhang mit dem Bekannten zu setzen suchen. Sie darf sich aber auch nicht hindern lassen, neue Kräfte und Gesetze anzuerkennen. Man hat einmal das Un- oder richtiger das Unterbewußte in unserm geistigen Leben herangezogen, das manche okkulte Erscheinung verständlicher macht, aber wir werden auch anerkennen müssen, daß es eine rein geistige Verbindung und Beeinflussung zwischen Menschen gibt, die sich ohne alle Mittel und Grenzen des gewöhnlichen Verkehrs vollzieht. Wir werden vielleicht auch anzuerkennen haben, daß einigen Menschen die Fähigkeit eignet, aus ihrer Materie heraus zeitweilig fein materielle Gebilde zu schaffen und nach ihrem Willen zu gestalten. Ohne weiter auf diese Einzelerklärungen einzugehen oder uns für die eine oder die andre zu entscheiden — das kommt nur den auf diesen Gebieten wirklich exakt arbeitenden Naturforscher und Psychologen zu —, fragen wir, welche Konsequenzen sich aus derartigen Feststellungen für unsere Weltanschauung ergeben.

Ich nenne zwei und fasse die erste in ein bekanntes Wort: „Es gibt mehr Dinge zwischen Himmel und Erde, als sich eure Schulweisheit träumen läßt.“ Die Wirklichkeit ist viel reicher und noch viel unausgeschöpfter, als sich die eingebilddete Weisheit vieler sogenannter moderner Menschen träumen läßt. Und dann das zweite: Eine rein materialistische Weltanschauung, das heißt eine Weltanschauung, die allem Geschehen materiellen Charakter beimißt oder es doch aus diesem rastlos ableiten will, widerspricht den Tatbeständen. Der Okkultismus bestätigt an seinem Teil auch — was alle Einsichtigen aus andern Tatbeständen wie denen des sittlichen,

künstlerischen, religiösen Lebens freilich längst wußten —, daß **der Geist eine selbständige Macht** ist, der seinerseits das körperliche Geschehen in weitgehendstem Maße beeinflussen kann. Diese Erkenntnis kann gerade die christliche Weltanschauung in sich aufnehmen und zur weiteren Stützung ihrer Ueberzeugung von der Selbständigkeit und Höherwertigkeit des Geistig-Göttlichen verwenden. Auch für eine andre, für die christliche Weltanschauung bedeutsame Erkenntnis, für die Möglichkeit einer Fortexistenz der menschlichen Seele bietet der Okkultismus zwar nicht die Begründung — die liegt in ganz andern religiös-sittlichen Thatbeständen — wohl aber eine willkommene Stützung gegenüber gegenteiligen Behauptungen. Je unabhängiger und selbstmächtiger in unsrer Wirklichkeit seelisch-geistiges Leben und zwar in individueller Gestalt auftritt, um so sicherer und leichter ist auch die Vorstellung eines selbständigen, individuellen, geistigen Lebens in einer andern als der leibverbundenen Form denkbar. — Dagegen verwickelt man sich bei den z. B. in dem Dinterschen Roman gemachten Versuch einer okkultistischen Erklärung der wunderbaren Begebnisse durch und an Jesus in so viele Schwierigkeiten und Wunderlichkeiten, daß diese Vorgänge dadurch auch für den gesunden Menschenverstand wirklich nicht begreiflicher werden. Es bleibt höchstens möglich, daß wie Jesus bei seinen Heilungen sich auch natürlicher Mittel wie der Anwendung des Speichels bediente, so auch okkulte Fähigkeiten hier und da benutzt hat, da diese als natürliche Bestandteile der Welt, die wir auch auf die göttliche Schöpfung zurückführen, nicht ausgeschlossen sind von ihrer Verwendung im Dienste der erlösenden religiös-sittlichen Wirksamkeit Jesu.

Unsre gesamten Ausführungen über den Okkultismus abschließend sagen wir: **Soweit der Okkultismus nichts anders sein will, wie eine Zusammenfassung innerweltlicher, bisher in ihrem Wesen noch nicht erkannter Kräfte, fällt seine Erforschung dem entsprechenden Einzelwissenschaften zu.** Er liefert gewisse Stützen für eine anti-materialistische Weltanschauung und ordnet sich — recht verstanden — durchaus dem christlichen Schöpfungs- und Erlösungsglauben ein.

### B. Spiritismus.

Der Okkultismus wird vielfach zur Unterlage und Beweis für den Spiritismus gebraucht. Die unerklärten okkultistischen Phänomene werden aus dem Eingreifen jenseitiger Geistwesen erklärt. Dieser Behauptung gegenüber fragen wir prüfend: Gibt es überhaupt solche Geister? und zum andern: Wirken sie nachweislich in diese Welt hinein? Die erste Frage können wir vom Standpunkt der christlichen Weltanschauung in aller Kürze beantworten: **Es gibt Geister!** Der Christ glaubt aus religiös-sittlichen Grün-



den an eine Fortdauer der Menschenseele in einer andern Daseinsform und hält in ihr auch die Existenz von Geistwesen überlegener Art für möglich und auf die Autorität Jesu hin für wirklich. Das Problem für die christliche Auseinandersetzung mit dem Spiritismus spitzt sich darauf zu: Bleiben oder sind diese Geister mit der Erde dauernd so verbunden, daß sie in ihr wirken können und gerade sich in den okkultistischen Erscheinungen sicher bemerkbar machen? Das wäre dann der Fall, wenn die Form und der Inhalt oder wenigstens eins von beiden mit vollkommener Sicherheit bei den okkulten Erscheinungen auf Geister schließen ließe.

Unter einem Geist verstehen wir ein unsinnliches, immaterielles, körperloses Wesen, das nicht an die raumzeitlichen und materiellen Lebensbedingungen unsrer Welt gebunden ist. Beim Spiritismus erscheinen aber die Geister niemals als solche reinen Geister, sondern in und durch Vermittlung menschlicher Medien, das heißt aber in materieller und sinnlicher Form. Der Spiritismus redet uns auch hier in der Sphäre materieller Vorgänge, wie Klopfen, Schlägen, Schreiben, Reden bewegen. Die Form der okkultistischen Vorgänge trägt mithin kein einziges Merkmal dafür an sich, daß wir es mit einer andern wirklich geistigen Welt, mit einem Jenseits im strengen Sinn zu tun haben. Die spiritistische Geisterwelt unterscheidet sich darum auf das bestimmteste von allen übrigen idealistischen Weltanschauungen, die wie der Platonismus eine Welt reinen Geistes ohne jede materielle und raumzeitliche Vorgänge annehmen. Sie steht auch in Differenz zu der christlichen Vorstellung von Gott und seinem ewigen Geisterreich, dessen Eigentümlichkeit es ist, daß es kein sinnliches Auge je gesehen, daß es in keines irdischen Menschen Ohr gekommen ist.

Steht es aber so, dann müßte die Legitimation der Geister, wenn es Geister sind, in dem Inhalt liegen, den sie bringen: sie müßten Erkenntnisse und Fähigkeiten betätigten, oder eine Religiosität und Sittlichkeit bezeugen, die über allen Menschenwert hinausgeht, und sie als Boten aus einer anderen höheren Welt legitimiert. Was aber ist tatsächlich der Inhalt dieser Geistererscheinungen?

Ihre Mitteilungen gehen allerdings zum Teil nicht nur über das Ober-, sondern auch über das Unterbewußtsein des betreffenden menschlichen Mediums, dann und wann auch über das Bewußtsein des ganzen Menschenkreises hinaus, mit dem das Medium im Moment oder auch dauernd zeiträumlich in Verbindung steht. Darin liegt in der Tat etwas uns bisher Unerklärliches, Okkultes, das wir früher in seiner Tatsächlichkeit anerkannt haben. Aber keiner dieser Inhalte geht über menschliches Maß überhaupt und den Gesamtinhalt dieser Welt hinaus. Nirgends hat sich uns bisher in

den Offenbarungen des Spiritismus ein Gedanke erschlossen, der über diese Welt hinaus geht und darum nur von den Angehörigen einer andern Wirklichkeit stammen kann. Alle Sprachen, die angeblich die Geister sprechen, sind als irgendeine irdische oder als ein Gemisch aus solchen erkannt worden; alle Rosen und alle Gegenstände, die Geister bringen, sind irdischer Art, denn sie welken und vergehen. Auch alle Mitteilungen aus Vergangenheit und Zukunft halten sich im Bereich dieser Welt. Denn auch vergangene irdische Geschichte hinterläßt Spuren, wenn auch feinerer Art, und sofern die kommende Geschichte aus der vergangenen mit Notwendigkeit erwächst, ist auch diese schon ein Stück irdischer Wirklichkeit. Jedes Unglück und jeder Todesfall bereitet sich im Gefüge des körperlich-seelischen Geschehens vor und ist darum schon ein Bestandteil innerweltlicher Tatsächlichkeit, so daß auch sie von besonders befähigten Menschen vorausgeahnt werden können. Auch der Inhalt der Geisterkundgebungen legitimiert mithin die Geister nicht als Boten einer höheren Welt, sondern ihre durchaus irdische Abkunft ist deutlich erkennbar. **Der Spiritismus verfügt darum weder hinsichtlich der Form noch des Inhaltes seiner Geistererscheinungen über einen Beweis, daß eine jenseitige Welt eingreift.**

Geistererscheinungen sind darum theoretisch nicht erwiesen, sie sind aber auch **praktisch überflüssig, ja zum Teil schädlich.** Von den Vertretern des Spiritismus werden zur Rechtfertigung der Geistererscheinung zweierlei praktische Gründe und Zwecke angeführt: Einmal bedürfen die Geister unsrer Hilfe, und auf der andern Seite bedürfen wir der ihren. Auf die erste Behauptung antworte ich zunächst ganz praktisch: Wir haben genug zu tun, um gerade auch in der Gegenwart unsern menschlichen Brüdern zu helfen und brauchen uns nicht nach Arbeit an den Geistern umzusehen. Als Christ füge ich hinzu: Die Geister sind in Gottes Reich, sie sind ihm näher als wir. Er wird für sie sorgen und, wenn es ihm nötig erscheinen sollte, andre Geister mit der Fürsorge für sie betrauen. **Nein, die Geister bedürfen unsrer wahrhaftig nicht,** jede Zitation auf diese Erde würde sie nur beunruhigen und ihnen schaden. Gerade wer seine Toten lieb hat, der läßt sie ruhen und weiß sie geborgen in den Händen des Vaters aller Geister: Selig die Toten, die in dem Herrn sterben, sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit.

Auf den andern Gedanken, daß wir der Geister bedürfen, um sittlich-religiös vorwärts zu kommen, antworten wir nur mit der Wiedergabe des **gewaltigen und schlagenden Schlusses des Gleichnisses Jesu vom reichen Mann und vom armen Lazarus.** Luk. 16: „Da sprach der reiche Mann: So bitte ich dich, Vater Abraham, daß du den Lazarus sendest in meines Vaters Haus, denn ich habe noch fünf Brüder, daß er ihnen bezeuge, auf daß sie nicht auch



kommen an diesen Ort der Dual. Abraham sprach zu ihm: Sie haben Mose und die Propheten, laß sie dieselben hören. Er aber sprach: Nein, Vater Abraham, sondern wenn einer von den Toten zu ihnen ginge, so würden sie Buße tun. Er aber sprach zu ihm: Hören sie Mose und die Propheten nicht, so werden sie auch nicht glauben, ob Jemand von den Toten auferstünde."

Wir Christen haben noch mehr als Mose und die Propheten, wir haben Christus und sein Evangelium. Durch diese wird auch die einzig mögliche und einzig wirkliche Verbindung zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits hergestellt. Die gleiche Zugehörigkeit zu Gottes Reich verbindet fest und dauernd die Lebendigen und die Toten. Beide stehen unter dem selben Monarchen und König, der sie jetzt noch in getrennten Provinzen leben läßt und um der Lebenden wie der Toten willen eine unübersteigbare Grenze gesetzt hat, die der Spiritismus vergeblich und zum Schaden einzureißen sucht.



## Sind die Wunder der Bibel eine Stütze oder ein Hindernis für den Glauben des Christen von heute?

Pastor G. Fr. Schueke, S. T. M.

„Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind.“ Das war einmal. Die Zeiten sind vorbei. Wollte man in früheren Zeiten die Allmacht Gottes beweisen, so berief man sich auf die Wunder, und aller Widerspruch verstummte. Heute muß man vorsichtig leise treten, wenn man überhaupt Wunder erwähnt. Unsere moderne Weltanschauung ist leider zu materialistisch eingestellt. Wunder gibt es nicht. Die Naturgesetze herrschen mit eiserner Regel. Wunderglaube ist unwissenschaftlich. Wie kann überhaupt in einem wissenschaftlichen Magazin noch ein Mann so altmodisch sein, über Wunder schreiben zu wollen? Und doch. Je und je geschieht es, daß mir nach Erscheinen eines meiner Aufsätze der Postbote ein Briefchen ins Haus trägt, oder daß auf einer Konferenz mir ein Bruder die Hand drückt und für meine Aufsätze dankt. So muß ich doch nicht so allein stehen. Das ermutigt mich auch jetzt wieder zur Feder zu greifen und die zur Frage stehende Abhandlung zu schreiben: Sind die Wunder der Bibel eine Stütze oder ein Hindernis für den Glauben des Christen von heute?

Zunächst muß ich aber meine Themaformulierung noch in etwas einschränken. Es gibt keine Christen von heute in dem Sinn, als ob die jetzige Gegenwart in Glaubensfragen andre Stellung einnehmen könne als frühere Zeiten. Rechtfertigen kann ich mein Thema nur im empirischen Sinn: Christen, wie sie heute nun einmal sind. Nicht daß ihnen ein Recht einzuräumen wäre, anders zu sein.

Zunächst müssen wir nun, ehe wir unser Thema behandeln, einige Definitionen geben. Zuerst, was sind Wunder? Für den Naturmenschen der ersten Generationen des Menschengeschlechts war alles *mirum* ein *mirabile* und darum ein *miraculum*. Wir müssen also den Begriff des Wunders höher einstellen als den Horizont der Naturkinder. Also was ist dem Menschen von heute ein Wunder? Die Welt von heute hat das Horatianische „*Nil admirari*“ nur zu gut gelernt. Dazu dekretiert die Wissenschaft (?), daß es keine Wunder gibt und geben kann. Damit wäre also unsere Frage beantwortet. Aber, bitte, nicht so eilig. Unser Thema spricht erstens nicht von Wundern im allgemeinen, sondern von den Wundern der Bibel, zweitens nicht von irgendwelchen glaubenslosen Menschen von heute, sondern von Christen. Damit sind unserm Thema zwei bedeutsame Beschränkungen hinzugefügt.



Was sagt also die Bibel zuerst selber von den Wundern? Im Alten Testament gibt es drei Bezeichnungen für ein Wunder, Zeichen, *מֹאֲתוֹת וּמִפְּתוֹת*. Nach Gesenius kann dies Wort bedeuten ein Warnungszeichen (Num. 17, 25; Deut. 28, 46) oder ein Vorzeichen einer künftigen Begebenheit (Jes. 8, 18; 20, 3) oder ein Hinweis auf eine höhere Macht (Jer. 10, 2; Deut. 4, 34 und öfter). Sodann wird das Wort *תִּפְעָלוֹת*, Wunder, gebraucht, häufig mit dem ersteren zusammen, Zeichen und Wunder (cf. Deut. 4, 34; 7, 19 usw.). Dann sind es Wunderzeichen göttlichen Schutzes (Psalm 71, 7) oder Vorzeichen (*prodigia*) eines zukünftigen Geschehens. Endlich aber betrachtet die Heilige Schrift die Wunder als Machterweisungen Gottes, *דִּבְרֵי קֳדָשׁ*. Man beachte: das ist Alles, nichts von Durchbrechung von Naturgesetzen oder dergleichen. Aber die blöde Menge, das profanum volgus, das den Worten eines Hamlet Beifall jauchzt, wenn er sagt: „Es gibt mehr Ding im Himmel und auf Erden, als eure Schulweisheit sich träumt,“ dieselbe Menge, sage ich, wenn die Bibel von etwas ihnen Unerklärlichem redet, ist sofort mit ihrem Urteil bei der Hand: Unsinn, kleinliche Geistesbeschränktheit ungebildeter Menschen; oder: Pfaffenschwindel, gemacht, um die dumme Masse unter dem Daumen zu halten.

Wir wollen nun zuerst einmal feststellen, was die Wunder nicht sind. Sie sind vor allen Dingen keine Durchbrechung der göttlichen Naturgesetze. Was sind die Naturgesetze? Sie sind ja keine zwingende Notwendigkeit, also etwas, das unbedingt so sein muß und nicht anders sein könnte. Damit wird dann schon zugleich der erste Einwand gegen die Wunder hinfällig, den man aus Gottes Allweisheit macht. Sollte Gott, sagt man, erst die Weltgesetze geben, um sie zu jeder Zeit wieder durchbrechen zu können? Hat er es nicht voraus gewußt, daß diese oder jene Gelegenheit kommen werde, wo die Naturgesetze nicht ausreichen und er sie durchbrechen muß? Aber: Die Naturgesetze sind eben keine göttlichen Gesetze, sondern was man nun mal so nennt, ist weiter nichts als die logische Deduktion, gegründet auf Empirie, von der Ordnung allen Geschehens in diesem Erdreich. Wo uns die Empirie fehlt, können wir keine Schlüsse machen, haben wir keine Naturgesetze. Wo uns also, besonders im Alten Testament, Dinge berichtet werden, die anscheinend dem bis jetzt bekannten Gesetz Gottes zu widersprechen scheinen, da haben wir entweder mangelhafte Beobachtung des Berichterstatters, oder eine Erkenntnis der Naturgesetze, die noch mangelhafter war, als die unsre ist, auf keinen Fall aber eine Durchbrechung der Naturgesetze, sondern im besten Fall eine Außerspielführung eines Gesetzes durch eine stärkere Kraft. Wir alle kennen das Gesetz der Schwere. Wir erleben aber täglich, daß dieses Gesetz z. B. durch Magnetismus aufgehoben werden kann, und doch schreien wir nicht

**Miraculum**, weil wir die stärkere Kraft kennen. Wir kennen aber nicht alle stärkeren Kräfte, die die empirischen Naturgesetze für eine Zeit auszuschalten vermögen. Darum werden wir auch in dem Alten Testament die Wunder nicht beseitigen können. Hätten wir alle Erkenntnis, so gäbe es keine Wunder. Dann könnten wir alles auf natürlichem Weg erklären. Ich will nicht in den rationalistischen Fehler verfallen und alles auf eine für unsre heutige Erkenntnis natürliche Weise erklären wollen, obwohl es einige Wunder gibt, die man heute bei dem vorgeschrittenen Stand der Erkenntnis als natürliche Geschehnisse erklären kann, wie z. B. den Durchgang der Kinder Israel durch das Rote Meer, wo das Wunder durchaus nicht in der Trockenlegung des Meeres durch den Ostwind besteht, sondern darin, daß dies auf das Gebet Moses grade an der Zeit geschah, wo die Not am höchsten drängte. Dadurch wird dieses Wunder dem Gebiet der Naturwunder gänzlich entzogen und in das Gebiet der Heilswunder gestellt, in das Gebiet der Gebetserhörnung. Wäre unsre Erkenntnis der göttlichen Weltordnung weiter vorgeschritten, so würde es weniger Wunder geben. Da wir aber nur stückweise erkennen (1. Kor. 13, 12), werden immer Dinge bleiben, die dem begrenzten menschlichen Erkenntnisvermögen ungreiflich erscheinen und von ihm darum als Wunder angesprochen werden.

Unter den verschiedenen Einteilungen, die man von den Wundern gemacht hat, erscheint mir die beste zu sein, die Wunder teils als Heilungswunder, teils als Heilswunder zu bezeichnen. Für Heilungswunder könnte man auch umfassender sagen: Naturwunder; denn Heilungswunder sind sie manchmal nur im übertragenen Sinn als Heilung der sündigen Menschheit. Diese letzteren sind als nicht unbedingt notwendige Wunder zu bezeichnen. Ob Bileams Eselin geredet hat, ob der Erlöser 5000 oder 4000 Menschen gespeist hat, darauf kommt es letzten Grundes für unsern Glauben nicht an. Wir könnten selig werden, auch wenn diese Speisungswunder nicht berichtet wären. Aber gerade an diesen Wundern stößt sich der moderne Mensch. Es ist das hoffärtige Wesen, in dem der Mensch sein eigenes Erkenntnisvermögen als Norm alles Erkennens aufstellt. Aber dann ist die Frage: Sind solche Menschen noch als Christen zu bezeichnen? Glücklicherweise ist diese Einstellung gegenüber den göttlichen Machtbeweisen noch nicht eine allgemeine. Wir finden sie am häufigsten in den Kreisen, über die die Bildung von fern her einen Schatten geworfen. Wahre Geistesbildung, echte Gelehrte, werden nicht etwas verwerfen, nur weil sie es nicht verstehen. Wo aber die Halbbildung unsrer modernen Hochschulen vorherrscht, da ist die Gefahr mehr vorhanden. Der folgende Satz mag wohl bei vielen Kopfschütteln



erregen, vielleicht auch direkten Widerspruch: Wunder sind kein Hindernis für den Glauben, auch keine Stütze desselben, sondern sind schlechthin unbedingt notwendige Vorbedingung desselben. Der Leser wird sich erinnern, daß ich als zweite Klasse der Wunder die Heilswunder genannt habe. Man hat sie auch Periodenwunder genannt; denn sie ereignen sich dann wenn in der Entwicklung des Reiches Gottes eine neue Periode anbricht. Dann treten sie in Erscheinung und zwar gehäuft. Es gibt in der Bibel lange anhaltende Zeiten, in denen wir keine Wunder berichtet finden, und dann wieder Zeiten, wo sie in größerer Zahl sich einstellen. Diese drei Epochen sind die erste Bundesschließung in der Schöpfung (mit der ganzen Menschheit), dann die besondere Bundesschließung (mit dem Volk Israel) und die Bundeserneuerung im Neuen Testament (wiederum mit der ganzen Menschheit). Wir werden alle Wunder um diese drei Epochen gruppiert finden. Die Schöpfung wird gemeinhin nicht als ein Wunder bezeichnet. Sie ist es aber doch. Sie ist eine Machterweisung des absoluten persönlichen Liebeswillens. Hier werden wir uns mit zwei modernen Richtungen auseinander zu setzen haben, der Evolutionstheorie und der sogenannten „Christlichen Wissenschaft.“ Sie sind gewissermaßen Antipoden: die Evolution behauptet die Ewigkeit des Stoffs, der Materie, die „Christian Science“ die Ewigkeit des Geistes. Beide leugnen die Realität des entgegenstehenden Prinzips, die Evolution des Geistes, die „Science“ die des Stoffes. Nun haben wir aber von dem ersten Tag der Schöpfung an beides in unserm Bewußtsein, Energie und Materie. Die Entstehung dieser beiden kann weder durch die Evolution noch durch die „Science“ zufriedenstellend erklärt werden. Eine der Wirklichkeit entsprechende Theorie der Welterschöpfung werden wir nur durch den Begriff des Wunders erlangen, d. h. einer Machterweisung der persönlichen Liebesenergie, Gottes. Mit der „Science“ ist keine Verständigung möglich, so lange sie praktisch lehrt: Gott sprach nicht: Es werde Licht, sondern Gott sprach: Es werde etwas, das der Mensch für Licht hält, mit andern Worten, sie die Realität der Dinge leugnet und nur die Realität des Geistes bestehen läßt. Wiederum ist mit der Evolution kein Friede möglich, solange sie die Ewigkeit der Materie behauptet und anstelle des Geistes die ewigen Naturgesetze stellt. Wiederum verweise ich auf was wir schon festgestellt haben, daß es keine Naturgesetze gibt. Das, was wir so nennen, ist nur die logische Erkenntnisform, unter denen der Mensch das Geschehen der Dinge begreift. Beide Weltanschauungen sind mit dem Christentum und der Bibel unvereinbar. Doch, meine ich, ist noch eher mit der Evolution eine Verständigung möglich als mit der „Science.“ Die Evolution geht aus von der Prämisse des Beste-

hens der Materie, für deren Entstehen sie keine Erklärung geben kann und geben will. Läßt sie uns unsre Erklärung des Entstehens der Materie durch ein Wunder, eine freie Entschließung der göttlichen Energie zu, dann können wir für das Weitere ruhig so viel Evolution zugestehen, wie man will. In der That, wir finden im Reich Gottes eine fortlaufende Evolution, eine progressive Evolution der Offenbarung, der Erkenntnis, der Gemeinschaft. In der That ist die Welterschöpfung ein Wunder, das Wunder der göttlichen Macht- und Liebeserweisung, daß er aus dem Nichts die Welt hervorrief. Wenn man dem Schöpfungsbericht der Bibel Unwissenschaftlichkeit vorwirft, so kann sich diese These nur halten lassen, wenn man auf kleine Nebendinge, wie die Länge der Schöpfungstage und dergleichen, das ganze Gewicht legt, anstatt auf das Wort, auf das allein es dem Christen ankommt, auf das Wort: **Gott**. Und doch ist diese Erklärung der Schöpfung als einer Erweisung der göttlichen Liebesmacht die einzige, die eine befriedigende Erklärung des Weltanfangs zu geben vermag. Ist dieses Wunder nun mit der Weltanschauung der Christen von heute unvereinbar? Ich sage: nein; wenn anders die Christen von heute eben noch Christen sind. Kann das unsern Glauben hindern, wenn wir in dem ersten Wort der Welt lesen dürfen: Gott ist die Liebe, die ganze Welt ist ein Beweis seiner Liebe und seiner Macht?

Auf die Schöpfung folgt eine lange Zeit, in der wir nichts von Wundern hören, bis wir zu der zweiten Epoche kommen, bei deren Anfang wir eine Häufung von Wundern finden. Zwar nicht eine Häufung innerhalb eines Tages oder Jahres. Aber die Wundervorboten dehnen sich auf eine längere Zeit aus, die den Anbruch einer neuen Epoche im Gottesreich vorausagt. Das eine große Hauptwunder dieser Zeit ist die Gesetzgebung auf dem Sinai. Alle die andern Wunder, die Moses auf dem Wüstenzug getan hat, sind nur Bestätigungen dieses einen großen Hauptwunders, der Betätigung des freien Liebeswillens und der unbeschränkten Allmacht Jehovas. Wiederum werfe ich die Frage auf: Kann das Wunder der Gesetzgebung dem Christen von heute ein Hindernis in seinem Glauben sein? Wenn der Mensch, der sich diese Frage vorlegt, wirklich und nicht nur dem Namen nach ein Christ ist, nimmermehr. Jesus hat ja das Gesetz als etwas nicht Vergängliches, sondern Ewiges bezeichnet. Er ist gekommen, das Gesetz zu erfüllen, nicht aufzulösen. Ich erachte, dieses Wunder der Gesetzgebung, daß Gott das Volk Israel so liebt, daß er mit ihm einen ewigen Bund schließt, ist eine der großen, starken Hauptstützen, auf denen des Christen Glauben ruht. Der Christ von heute mag in dem Gesetz vielleicht die enge Schranke erblicken, die die menschliche Freiheit ungebührlich (???) einengt. Aber wieder: Sind das noch Chri-



sten, die wie vorhin ihr eigenes Erkenntnis, so nun die eigene Lust anstelle der göttlichen Liebesoffenbarung setzen wollen und können? Sehen wir im Gesetz nicht nur auf die negative Seite, sondern auf den positiven Grundinhalt, daß Gott aus lauter Liebe der Sünde Schranken zieht, damit Israel ein Volk seines Wohlgefallens werde, dann kann das Wunder des Gesetzes kein Hindernis bedeuten.

Die nächste Wunderperiode finden wir in den Tagen Elias und Elisas. Aber die Wunder dieser Zeit sind alle Naturwunder, die für unsre Glaubensstellung wenig oder gar nichts zu besagen haben. Ihre Veranlassung ist der Versuch Gottes, das gesunkene Haus Israel wieder in das alte Bundesverhältnis zurückzubringen. Aber wie gesagt, von geringer Bedeutung für den modernen Menschen. Ob Elias durch die Raben am Bach Krith versorgt ist, oder ob der Sohn der Sunamitin wieder gesund zum Leben aus dem Tod zurückkommt, das hat für den Christen nur Wert als Analogie, als Typus der Dinge, die auch heute noch dem Glaubenden geschehen können und sollen.

Eine neue, die letzte Periode der biblischen Heilswunder konzentriert sich um die Person unsers Heilandes, des Herren Jesu Christi. Wir finden in seinem Erdenleben sowohl Naturwunder als auch Heilswunder. Ja, sein Kommen auf Erden allein ist das größte Heilswunder, das man sich denken kann. Wir wollen hier nicht weiter reden über das Wunder der Jungfrauengeburt. Diese wird sich in das Gebiet einreihen lassen, wo die Naturgesetze durch das Hineintragen einer höheren Kraft zeitweilig ausgeschaltet werden. Sondern das rechte große Hauptwunder ist die Menschwerdung des eingebornen Sohnes Gottes. Alles andre ist nebensächliche Begleiterscheinung. Aber die Geburt Jesu ist in rechtes, großes Hauptwunder — mag man nun an *συνεῖα* oder *τέρατα* oder *δυνάμεις* denken. Sie ist ein Semeion der göttlichen Gnade und Erbarmung, ein Teras der Weltregierung Gottes und eine Dynamis, ein Beweis der göttlichen Allgewalt. Wie ein Christ darin ein Hindernis seines Glaubens finden kann, ist mir unbegreiflich. Wer sich daran ärgert, der versucht Gott von seinem Thron zu stoßen und sich mit seiner kleinen menschlichen Vernunft auf diesen Thron zu setzen. Vielmehr ist das Wunder der Menschwerdung doch der Punkt der Bibel, auf dem alles Glauben beruht. Wir können sie eigentlich auch nicht eine Stütze des Glaubens nennen, sondern seine Vorbedingung „*sine qua non*.“ Mit Recht bezeichnen wir die Menschwerdung als ein Wunder. Oder ist es nicht ein Wunder, daß trotz aller Sünde, trotz des allgemeinen Abfalls von Gott, trotz alle dem und alle dem, Gott keinen Gedanken an Strafe oder Rache hegt, sondern so die Welt liebt, daß er seinen eingebornen Sohn

gibt. Hier haben wir das **mirum** und das **mirabile** zusammen als ein wirkliches **miraculum**. Aber damit sind die Wunder in des Heilandes Erdenwallen noch nicht erschöpft. Wir haben die Kreuzigung. Man wende mir nicht ein: Das ist kein Wunder, sondern ganz natürlich zugegangen. Ja, wenn wir nur auf die Außenseite sehen wollen. Nein, wenn wir in den tiefsten Kern eindringen. Gottes Liebe manifestiert sich in Jesu Tod, zusammen mit seiner Macht. Und das sollte dem Christen von heute ein Hindernis zum Glauben sein? Was ist Glauben denn anders, als das unbedingte Vertrauen auf diesen Tod. Wohl, heutzutage heißt es: „Work out your own salvation,“ heute hört man mehr als genug von dem sozialen Evangelium. Aber wieder: Sind denn das Christen, die den Opfertod Jesu beiseite schieben? Oder nehmen wir des Herrn Auferstehung. Wie ist da Pontius Pilatus und Herodes auf einmal Freund. Pontius, die auf Empirie sich stützende Wissenschaft. Herodes, der kalte Weltmensch, der das Leben und Wirken eines lebendigen Erlösers im menschlichen Leben nicht haben will. Und doch ist Ostern alles neuen Lebens Grund und allen Glaubens Quell. Sind das, frage ich noch einmal, Christen, die von diesem Grund weichen und diese Quelle verstopfen möchten?

Saben wir also festgestellt, daß die Wunder nicht nur kein Hindernis, auch keine Stütze, sondern **unbedingte Grundlage alles Glaubens** sind, so mögen wir doch noch einige Worte den Natur- und Heilungswundern der Bibel widmen. Nehmen wir an, daß die Bibel von allen diesen Dingen, wie die Heilung des Hiskias durch Jesaja, die Austreibung der Dämonen in die Säue der Gadarener, die Reinigung der zehn Aussätzigen, das schwimmende Eisen Elisas nicht in der Bibel ständen, was verschlänge das? Oder nehmen wir an, daß solcher Wundertaten noch viele mehr in der Schrift berichtet wären, als es sind, würde das unsern Glauben stärken können? Diese Wunder als Hindernis des Glaubens zu bezeichnen, ist nur eine erbärmliche Ausrede, wie im Gleichnis vom großen Abendmahl. Ich habe einen Acker Land gekauft, ich habe fünf Joch Ochsen gekauft, ich habe mir ein Weib genommen; darum kann ich, nein will ich nicht kommen. Rücken seihen und Rameele verschlucken. Nehmen wir das größte Wunder unbedenklich aus Gottes Hand, seine ewige Liebe, und wollen solche Kleinigkeiten vorschützen, um nicht ihm folgen zu müssen, wie klein, wie erbärmlich! Ja aber, höre ich, die Schrift berichtet doch Dinge, die einfach unmöglich sind, wie das Stillstehen der Sonne im Tal Ajalon? Das Arden der Schlange, der Eselin Bileams? Nun gut, was weiter? Das kann man doch nicht bei dem Stand der modernen Wissenschaft annehmen. Zugegeben, vielleicht nicht bei



dem jetzigen Stand; wie aber bei zukünftigen Ständen? Grade der moderne Mensch hat in den letzten fünfzig Jahren so vieles lernen müssen, was man früher als einfach unmöglich bezeichnet hätte; warum wollen wir denn nicht auch hier sagen: **Ihr werdet es aber hernach erfahren.** Vergessen wir doch nicht: In aller Wissenschaft ist das letzte Wort **noch nicht** gesprochen; jetzt erkennen wir stückweise.

Und sehen wir besonders auf Jesu Naturwunder, wie können sie dem Glauben doch grade als unerschütterliche Stütze dienen. Seine Totenerweckungen, des Jairus Töchterlein, der Witwe Sohn, Lazarus, wie geben sie Trost und Kraft dem Glauben, der an offenen Gräbern weint. Darin haben wir die Gewißheit: Auch wir sollen leben. Die Heilung des Blindgeborenen: auch meine Augen sollen aufgetan werden, daß ich in seinem Licht das Licht sehe. Die Speisungen: auch uns wird Manna dargereicht; die Reinigung der Aussätzigen: auch mir sind meine Sünden vergeben. Lassen wir doch diese selbstzufriedene, angeblich wissenschaftliche Ablehnung der Wunder; sie führt uns zu nichts. Sie macht uns das Glauben nur schwer. Es liegt wirklich auch nicht der geringste Grund vor, weshalb wir die Wunder ablehnen müßten. Es liegen aber alle Gründe vor, weshalb die Wunder Gottes unserm Glauben die stärkste Stütze sein können.

Noch ein Wort: Als unwiederlegliches Argument gegen die Wunder der Bibel wird auch angeführt: Warum wiederholen sich die Wunder der Bibel denn nicht auch heute noch? Warum verhalten sich die höheren Kräfte jetzt so stille? Unsere Antwort ist, auf des Herrn Wort zu verweisen: Selig sind, die nicht sehen und doch glauben. Sie haben Moses und die Propheten; glauben sie denen nicht, so würden sie auch nicht glauben, so jemand von den Toten auferstände. Uebrigens geschehen auch heute noch Zeichen und Wunder. Ich will nicht reden von Gebetserhörungen. Wer die ablehnt, streicht sich selbst damit aus der Reihe der Christen. Aber ich will darauf hinweisen, daß im Reich der Mission auch heute noch viele Wunder vorkommen, vergleiche Missionar Rommensen auf Sumatra (siehe Warneck, Missionsstunden II, 11, S. 103). Das erkläre ich mir so, daß in den Heidengebieten die dritte Weltperiode, die Erneuerung des Bundesverhältnisses Gottes mit der Menschheit erst eben jetzt anbricht, und daß darum eben die begleitenden Zeichen dieser Erneuerung in Erscheinung treten. Das war schon in der Zeit der Apostel der Fall, daß der Herr die Missionspredigt durch mitfolgende Zeichen bekräftigte (Markus 16, 20). Und darum geschehen im Gebiet der Mission noch heute Wunder.

## EDITORIALS

### THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

Sometime ago a prominent local Methodist congregation observed the first anniversary of the dedication of its beautiful sanctuary. On the last day of the festivities they had Dr. Morrison there, the editor of the "Christian Century." We had heard him before, but a man like Mr. Morrison you can hear twice. He read the story of Christ's transfiguration (Luke 9, 28 ff.) and took for his text the 35th verse, "And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him." The subject he derived from it was, The authority of Christ.

He said there were three attitudes one could take towards Christ. The first was, *admiration*. Such a character as Christ's evokes admiration naturally. His is a charming personality. Renan, the famous French writer, in his "Life of Jesus" took that attitude, describing the loveliness of Jesus. And one of the latest books on Jesus, that by Papini, follows the same line. He attempts no theological constructions; he just pictures the attractiveness of the man of Nazareth.

The second attitude is that of *explanation*: Whence came this man, who is he? Christ is the problem of the ages. As soon as the gospel came in contact with culture the thought of man tried to account for him. The church has put these explanations into her creeds. The apologists tried to defend the faith against the attacks of pagan objectors. This has gone on down to our own time when we are seeking to reconcile science and faith.

Are we still able to meet the argument of science with the weapons of the past? Can we validate the Christian faith, or the authority of Christ, by pointing to the prophecies fulfilled in him, to his miracles, to the fact of his virgin birth? One only needs to mention these things to feel the inadequacy of the old apologetics, so said the speaker. We live in an age that brooks no authority, except that of facts whose reality has been tested by experiment. Still, we need not fear the application of modern and scientific methods to all parts of our Christian faith. If we apply it to the bible we may have to give up some of our present views of it (e. g. that of its inerrancy) but it will remain the book of books. If we apply it to Christ we may come to different theological conclusions, but he will not lose his place as a true guide in life. If we



hear a violin player put forth inspiring music; if we see a doctor perform wonderful operations; or an inventor build a plane that really flies: we do not ask them for their credentials, we accept them as authorities in their line. In this way we find the true appreciation of Christ. He has helped others, all through the centuries, to build up a Christian character, why should he not do the same for us? This last, this pragmatic method, so concluded the speaker, is the one to apply today. That will then help us to take the right, the third attitude towards Christ, that of *obedience*. We will follow him and live in his spirit.

The sermon was well worked out, the speaker held the attention of his audience for fifty minutes. He hadn't quite enough time for the last point. Christ, by almost universal consent, is an expert in the art of living. He can therefore expect us to treat him as an authority in this field. To learn the Christ-way of living is more important than to speculate about his nature. True, but Christ's ethical teaching is altogether based on his religious faith. To him God was the father, who is back of all earthly things and presides over the course of nature for the benefit of his children. Is he still an authority in his teaching about God when so many substitute a finite God for God Almighty, a God who needs our cooperation in the execution of his plans? The Son of Man expected to return in his own good time. He rose from the dead and said that he would prepare heavenly mansions for his own.

His authority in all these points, and in others, is contested by many. The speaker threw no light on these vital questions. Hence his suggestion to accept Christ as an authority in the conduct of life must be termed inadequate. The only way out of the dilemma was, in our view, to recognize the testimony of scripture, the belief of the church of all ages, and the Christian's own spiritual experiences as authorities still in effect. Any other course would lead to an extreme subjectivism, on which the individual cannot live and which has been the weakness of Protestantism throughout its history.

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## WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

In the same church we mentioned above, a brief "Retreat" for ministers was held, a week or two after the anniversary exercises. The chief speaker was Robert E. Speer, the grand old man of the Presbyterian Church. And not only of the Presbyterian. An outstanding minister of the Methodist Church, in introducing Speer, said he had heard him thirty years before at some Chautauqua meeting. Speer had so thrilled him that the impression of it was still so fresh with him as though it had been only yesterday. The

president of a Baptist seminary in the east, also present, made the statement that Speer's book on "The Marks of a Man" had done more for him than any other book next to the bible (we thought this was going rather far). Speer said, two questions were uppermost in the minds of Christian men today: what is Christianity and what is Christ? (We heard him only on the first question.)

There are a great many answers to both questions, and they differ widely. It would be unreasonable to expect a uniformity of opinion and expression. Still in the long run a great many differences would disappear. It would be seen that they had been the result of an over-emphasis on certain points, which, naturally produced a shifting of emphasis to the neglected teachings. In the end the various positions would be recognized as partial aspects of a larger whole. He then quoted two books from well-known Presbyterians, Dr. Merrill, of New York, and Dr. Paton of Princeton, the one a liberal, the other a conservative, as examples of these "partial aspects of a larger whole." He said, some in describing a tree might put all the stress on the root; others on the trunk, the crown, or the fruit. In reality, however the tree is not one or the other of these things, but the sum of all of them. The same applies to Christianity. Although thus Speer seemed to have room for different schools of thought, he was, nevertheless, very outspoken on essentials. Our Christian faith is built on a foundation of solid fact, the person, life and work of Jesus Christ. We are not like some, who are satisfied with the Christ idea and who could get along with that alone, even if Christ was no historic person. Nor can the church be without creeds. Any explanation of the meaning of a fact of faith is a creed, or the germ of a creed. All churches have felt the need of expressing the deep conviction they have about the way to God and the true life, in creeds or confessions.

The creeds are guides to the inexperienced, protectors from errors, creators of loyalty. We often render lip service to them, give them intellectual assent. But such abuse does not condemn the right use. Still, how about the fruits? So asks the present-day age. Is it not more important to learn the *way of life* Christ taught, to get the religion of Jesus than that about him? The "way of life" is no modern invention. The Christians were already in apostolic times called the "men of the way," i. e. the Christian way. They insisted, however, on faith in three facts: God the creator; Jesus the redeemer, and his resurrection as the pledge of our own future life. Only so could they attain the full life, only so express the divine in human lives (Paul: For me to live is Christ).

We felt in listening to Speer that we were flesh of his flesh,



or shall we say, that he was flesh and bone of ours, more than we could have said of Morrison. Just the same, Mr. Morrison is doing a noble, a wonderful work. We need the more mobile minds of the liberals as well as the staunch firmness of the conservatives. The Protestant needs the Catholic, the Reformed needs the Lutheran. We can get some good from all of them. If it weren't so how could we ever hope to come to some kind of unity in the faith, how ever realize the article in the creed of the communion of saints?

### Die Kirchenvereinigung.

Es ist etwa drei Jahre her, daß die große Frage der Kirchenvereinigung auch bei uns in ein neues, hoffnungsvolles Stadium trat. Erst waren es die Reformierten, dann auch bald die Vereinigten Brüder und die Evangelische Kirche (früher Evangelische Gemeinschaft), die mit uns in Unterhandlung traten zwecks einer möglichen Kirchenverschmelzung. Die Evangelische Kirche zog sich bald zurück, so daß nun noch drei Kirchenkörper blieben, welche ernstlich und gründlich in Erwägung zogen, ob nicht bei aller Anerkennung von Verschiedenheiten doch eine gemeinsame Grundlage zu finden sei, auf der sie zusammen kommen könnten. Die gegenseitigen Kommissionen arbeiteten fleißig, und eine Unionsbasis wurde gefunden, die den Generalkonferenzen zur Beratung in Beschlußfassung vorgelegt werden sollte.

Unsre Generalkonferenz in Rochester (1929) nahm die Unionsbasis einstimmig an, und eine Kommission wurde ernannt, um mit den andern Kirchen in Fühlung zu treten und wenn möglich einer wirklichen Vereinigung die Wege zu bahnen. Die Generalkonferenzen der Reformierten und Vereinigten Brüder sprachen sich auch günstig über die Sache aus, doch nicht mit der Einstimmigkeit und dem Enthusiasmus, wie unsre es getan. Man gewann bei uns den Eindruck, daß eine Vereinigung mit den Vereinigten Brüdern nicht so sehr wahrscheinlich sei. Nicht, weil sie in Lehre und Verfassung so sehr von uns abweichen, sondern weil sie in Sachen mancher Lebensgewohnheiten eine strengere Stellung einnahmen als wir.

Seitdem ist nun ein Jahr vergangen oder mehr, und während eines Teiles dieses Jahres war Schreiber dieses nicht in der Lage, den Entwicklungen zu folgen, nahm aber an, daß alles in Ordnung sei. Man denke sich daher sein Erstaunen, als er in der „Ohio Christian News“ (pub. by the Ohio Council of Churches) vom 17. Oktober las, daß das reformierte spezielle Komitee von 21 weitere Bemühungen zur Vereinigung der drei Kirchen als nicht ratsam und nicht durchführbar aufgegeben habe und nun sich auf die Union mit der Evangelischen Synode beschränken werde. Große „Klassen“ in Pennsylvania wären entschieden gegen die Verschmel-

zung. Außerdem heie es in einem krzlichen Editorial der „Christian World“ (Cleveland), eines reformierten Organs, da irgend eine Vereinigung mit der Evangelischen Synode auch eine weitgehende Union mit reformierten und presbyterianischen Denominationen in Betracht ziehen msse.

Dagegen stand in derselben Nummer der „Christian News“ die Nachricht von Bischof Clippinger, da alle Konferenzen der U. B. vom Osten bis zum Westen des Landes den Unionsplan der drei Kirchen einstimmig angenommen htten, und da die Vereinigten Brder bereit wren zur Union, wenn anders die Reformierten und Evangelischen desselben Sinnes seien!

Also die Reformierten erklren die Verschmelzung der drei Kirchen fr unrtlich und untnlich und die Vereinigten Brder nehmen den Plan einstimmig an. Gerade das Gegenteil von dem, was wir erwartet hatten.

Was nun die weitere Entwicklung in dieser wichtigen Angelegenheit bringen wird, bleibt abzuwarten. Unser eigenes Komitee fr Engere Beziehungen hat noch nicht ffentliche Stellung genommen, soviel wir wissen. Es steht zu hoffen, da die Bewegung, die bei uns so groe Hoffnungen auslste, nicht im Sand verlaufen mge.

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### Das freie Gebet.

Das freie Gebet im Gottesdienst beschrnkte sich bei uns frher auf das — meist kurze — Gebet am Schlu der Predigt. Die sogenannte „Invokation“, oder der Introitus, wurde gewhnlich aus der Agende verlesen oder bestand in einem kurzen Bibelwort. Auch das Gebet nach dem ersten Gesang wurde meist aus der Agende genommen.

Neuerdings ist das vielfach anders geworden. Bei den englisch-amerikanischen Kirchen hat — von den Episkopalen abgesehen — das gedruckte Gebet nie in Gunst gestanden. Schon die Invokation und erst recht das Hauptgebet im Anfang des Gottesdienstes waren immer freie Schpfungen des Predigers, oder sollten wir nicht lieber sagen, spontane Ergieungen seines seelischen Gefhls. Lange Uebung gab eine ziemliche Freiheit des Ausdrucks, so da, wovon das Herz voll war, der Mund berflieen konnte. Das ganze weite Gebiet des religisen Lebens und der kirchlichen Ttigkeit lag vor ihnen, und mit Wonne bemchtigte sich die betende Inbrunst dieses reichen Stoffes. Kein Wunder, da das Gebet offiziell „the long prayer“ genannt wurde und oft an die Andacht der zuhrenden Gemeinde groe Anforderungen stellte. Es war gut, da die Gemeinde sitzen bleiben konnte. Htte sie,



wie bei uns, stehen müssen, so wäre gewiß manchem schwach geworden und das bekannte Pfefferminz-Tablettchen sehr willkommen gewesen.

Seit längerer Zeit ist diese englisch-amerikanische Sitte auch bei uns eingedrungen. Ja, die jüngeren Brüder richten ihre Gottesdienstordnung ganz nach amerikanischem Muster ein. Der Einfluß der Umgebung, landweit, wie sie ist, ist stärker geworden als das bescheidene Erbteil der Mutterkirche. Feste Sitten und konfessionelle Schranken haben wesentlich nur die Katholiken und Lutheraner; alle andern Kirchen der Eingewanderten sind demselben Druck von außen unterlegen. Das wird auch in Zukunft sich weiter so auswirken.

Wenn dem so ist in Bezug auf das freie Gebet im Gottesdienst, so erhebt sich die Frage: Wie können wir desselben Meister werden, ohne in die Gefahr der Weitschweifigkeit und der steten Wiederholung derselben Gedanken zu verfallen? Schreiber dieses möchte zur Beantwortung dieser Frage einen Weg andeuten, der ihm oft geholfen hat. Es ist nicht nötig, sich auf das Gebet so vorzubereiten wie auf eine Predigt (obwohl einige das mit Erfolg tun). Aber es ist ein gutes Mittel, sich einen Bibelspruch als Grundlage des Gebets zu wählen und dessen Gedanken im Gebet auszuführen, nachdem vorher der Geist eine Zeitlang darüber gebrütet hat.

Man wird finden, daß sich alsdann die Gebetsstimmung einstellt; daß eine gewisse innere Freude und Freiheit die Schwingen der Seele in Bewegung setzt, und daß es leicht ist, an passender Stelle das einzufügen, was spezielle Gelegenheiten oder Ereignisse erfordern. Da man immer andre Bibelsprüche wählt, so fehlt nicht die Abwechslung. Zugleich ist der Weitschweifigkeit ein Ziel gesetzt durch den Hauptgedanken des Bibelspruchs. Man soll sich überhaupt hüten, ziel- und endlos durch das ganze Gebiet der Schöpfung und Erlösung zu schweifen. Es gibt kaum etwas, was die Gemeinde so ermüdet. Innere Wärme und das Seufzen der Seele ist wichtiger als beredte Worte. Wortschwall und ein Wiederkäuen frommer Phrasen sind ein Mißbrauch des Heiligtums.

Es sind im allgemeinen wenig Leute, die im öffentlichen freien Gebet rechte Befriedigung geben. Schreiber ist der Ueberzeugung, daß eine Befolgung des vorgeschlagenen Rezeptes eine Besserung der Sachlage herbeiführen würde.

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# The Christian World

## The Tragedy of Unemployment in New York

It has been long realized that unemployment is widespread in America, and especially in New York, where countless thousands drift in search of a living. But while expert economists and industrialists have been discussing deep-seated theories for the alleviation of this condition, few have given a thought to how its victims live.

There are, of course, certain organized charities whose efforts are co-operative, and through which the family without an income receives a pittance now and again. But what of that great mass of young men—craftsmen, laborers, clerks, professional men—who, discouraged at the lack of opportunity at home, swarm into New York City hopeful of finding a niche?

I am one of them. Before I came here I was a mediocre newspaper reporter in New England—just where doesn't matter. Nearly two months ago I came here with less than twenty dollars in my pockets, and no clothing other than what I wore. I knew no one in New York. The story of my search for work in my own line is the oft-repeated round of city editors who frankly told me I had but slim chance of finding a place on a newspaper. Soon, completely broke, I gave up this vain hunt for reportorial work, and sought—still seek—any kind of work that will keep me from starvation.

The hope inspired by long lines of employment agencies in Sixth Avenue soon faded when I learned that fees must be paid in advance and that frequently men are deliberately sent to positions for which they are obviously unfitted so that the same jobs can be sold and resold.

Want ad pages carry only openings for highly specialized workers. One chain of theaters, for instance, demands that all ushers and doormen must not only be experienced, but they must be six feet tall and between twenty and twenty-five years of age. An employer in any line can demand any specifications he wishes, and be sure of filling them, because the field from which he chooses is so large.

How, then, have I kept alive?

At first I slept in subways and lived on cigarettes and coffee. But even this expense was too great after the first few weeks. The subways gave place to the parks, for the very simple reason that I had not the nickel for fare. The parks, however, are patrolled by police officers grown brutal with long experience with "bums." Sleepers on benches are frequently wakened by the whack of a nightstick against the soles of their blistered feet. My own experience of this kind had a twofold effect. First, it sent an electric pain through every vein of my hunger-racked body. And, second, it engendered in me a very real hatred for policemen, whose place in my esteem had already been quite low.



Life of this kind has brought me into intimate contact with hundreds of others, equally unfortunate, in the search for work. And, talking with them, I have learned that many are on the verge of criminal careers. No doubt, many others have already embarked upon such careers.

Not to condone (I sometimes wonder why) but rather to explain, let us think for a moment of the psychology of a jobless youth who turns to crime.

In the first place, he is a skilled craftsman, capable of earning a very comfortable living. He is young. He is accustomed to such pleasures as a young worker enjoys—dancing, motion pictures, trips to amusement parks, and clean association with young women. Thrown out of work by a cessation of orders in the mill back home, he is lured to New York. For weeks he walks the streets, answers want ads, haunts employment offices always hearing the same old story—"Nothing open to-day."

At night he is drawn to Broadway. He must walk the streets, for he has no home. And he chooses to walk in the crowds—rather than in back alleys. He sees in Times Square the throbbing mass of pleasure-bent humans—bankers, bootleggers, shopgirls, showgirls, millionaires, clerks—every one seeking pleasure (most of them in vain, incidentally) and every one spending—spending on luxuries—spending in the mad hunt for happiness—spending money that would buy him coffee and a night's "flop." His head reels dizzily as he recalls three or four sleepless nights of "carrying the banner."

A little after midnight he drifts into the darkness of the Forties west of Broadway. He panhandles for a cigarette, asking perhaps half a dozen men before he is successful. Each succeeding refusal increases his bitterness, and with difficulty he restrains the impulse to attack those who refuse him. He learns, too, that it is always the poor man who responds, the man who perhaps has suffered as he suffers.

He goes finally to Bryant Park, whence he is driven by the stick-wielding patrolman. Back to Broadway to see the night clubs disgorging men in boiled shirts and women in spangled evening clothes—both men and women more or less drunk, drunk with liquor or with dizzy round of pleasure-haunts. He sees, as I have been, an inebriated broker peel a ten-dollar bill from a generous roll to tip a doorman.

Money everywhere—money that would do so much for him, sleep, a bath, clothes, food! Strength for his willing arms that have been denied a chance to work. And eventually he succumbs to that lurking temptation that has haunted him for days. He attacks some returning reveler and goes through his victim's pockets. He finds it easy, and he soon gives up the idea of working.

Once launched on a career of crime, he grows more daring, until he becomes a full-fledged gangster. He fights back his conscience with the argument that cold, cruel New York has left him no other road.

His argument may be wrong. No doubt it could be refuted in a hundred very logical ways. But standing clear and real above all

theories is the cold, hard fact that the youth was starving, despite his willingness to engage in honest toil.

Unemployment, then, is something more than an economic problem. Some agency—the church, the state, the city—must come to the rescue before the great demon that is called American industrial efficiency destroys the souls of the thousands upon thousands whose bodies it has tortured with hunger and pain, and whose minds it has come close to deranging.—*Prince M. Carlisle, in the Churchman.*

### Understanding India's Political Situation

BY BISHOP BRENTON THOBURN BADLEY  
*Bombay, India*

There are serious difficulties in understanding the present political situation in India, first because it is complex, next is distant, and, further, because there is so much propaganda in the newspapers. Several facts regarding the general situation must be known before one is in a position to understand and judge what appears in the newspapers of the United States. We need a sympathetic attitude, but none the less must have the background, in order to interpret correctly the news that reaches us from India.

#### THERE IS NO REAL "NATIONAL" CONGRESS

There is no "national Congress in the sense of a body representing both Hindus and Mohammedans, and speaking for the various political groups of the land. The so-called "National Congress" that met at Lahore last December did not represent (with the exception of individual politicians) the following great groups: (1) the seventy million Mohammedans; (2) the ruling princes of the native states, with their seventy-five million people, who have their own "Chamber of Princes" and deal directly with the government; (3) the Liberal Party, or Right Wing, that stands for co-operation with the government in the achievement of Home Rule; (4) the Revolutionary Party, or extremists. This Congress represents really the Non-Co-operation Party, and was itself split by the decision of the majority to stand for independence of Great Britain. This is Mahatma Gandhi's party, which since last December has stood for independence of the British government, and has adopted civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes as its means of paralyzing the existing government. The Mohammedans have voiced their opposition to the principles and methods of this party through spokesmen who have expressed the Moslem sentiment in recent statements issued by them in behalf of their constituencies. The ruling princes have no sympathy with Mahatma Gandhi's aims or spirit, and look to their own "Chamber of Princes" to voice their desires, while they acknowledge openly that the stability of their thrones is guaranteed only by Great Britain under whose protection they and their ancestors have reigned for 100 years or more. It must not be supposed, therefore, that Mahatma Gandhi and his party can speak for the nation, or that their aspirations voice the desire of India's people as a



whole. If there were any great political body in India representative of the people of that land, and that body were now claiming independence of the British Government, the situation in India would be vastly different from what it is. The parallel that some draw between India today and the colonies of America just before the Revolution does not exist.

#### INDEPENDENCE IS NOT INDIA'S GOAL

All political parties in India stand for Home Rule, including the British Government itself, which, under the form of dominion status, has pledged self-government to India. No party could have any existence that did not make Home Rule its avowed objective. It is not to be supposed that Mahatma Gandhi and his followers are trying to wrest Home Rule from an unwilling government—they are now engaged in a serious attempt to defy the Government, make government impossible, and get for India complete independence of Great Britain. In this effort they do not represent either the larger or better informed portion of India's people, nor have they yet stated what form of government they would try to establish if Great Britain were to withdraw. For this reason the situation in India is not nearly so serious as is supposed by many in America, and as newspaper comments might lead one to believe. I have noted within the past few days several pictures of happenings in India which were stated to be connected with the political situation, whereas I know, by residence in the very cities where these pictures were taken, that they concerned purely industrial or economic matters, with no political bearing whatever. In one case, it was a railway strike in Bombay in which the populace was said to be Mahatma Gandhi's followers, demonstrating because of the arrest of one of his lieutenants; and in the other it was a municipal strike owing to a new law that the Calcutta municipality had introduced with regard to the excessive loading of ox-carts. It seems to be the fashion to connect all the happenings in India with events related to Mahatma Gandhi's campaign of civil disobedience. If the educated people of India, both Hindu and Mohammedan, were organized in one main political body, and were demanding independence of Great Britain, we should have something fundamentally different from what we know exists. Perhaps the outstanding Hindu editor of the political party that stands for Home Rule, himself a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi, is Mr. K. Natarajan, editor of the "Indian Social Reformer," Bombay. Writing under the date of March 29 (while Mahatma Gandhi was on his march to the sea) he says, "We dissent from the independence goal, and approve of working out our destiny within the Commonwealth of British nations." This position is held by a far greater part of India's thinking people than that of independence, which Mahatma Gandhi has so recently been led to announce as his goal. This departure on his part, it is claimed by those who are close to the situation, was against his best judgment, being due to a political situation which he felt he could not meet otherwise.

## A PURE DEMOCRACY NOT DESIRED

India is not seeking to introduce a real democratic form of government. With a national illiteracy of about eighty-five per cent, voting by ballot is out of the question, even if Hindu-Moslem rivalries did not create a virtual prohibition. A true democracy is opposed there by the following great groups: (1) The Moslems, numbering seventy millions, who, if the destinies of the land were to be determined by the ballot, would be outvoted by the Hindus nearly three to one. Up to the present, communal representation in the legislative bodies has made possible a restricted use of the ballot. (2) The Native States, under their independent rulers. These states include one third of the geographical extent of the land, with a population of about 75,000,00 people. Their citizens are so divided between Hinduism and Islam as to make both sides unwilling to let the ballot determine political issues. They are not asking for democracy, and their rulers must naturally oppose that form of government under existing conditions. In some cases a Hindu ruler has a great majority of Moslem subjects, for instance, the Maharajah of Kashmir has ninety-five per cent Moslem subjects; while in other cases a Mohammedan ruler has a vast majority of Hindu subjects, as is the case in the largest native state of India, Hyderabad. The religious bigotry and political rivalries of these two great races have made co-operation between them impossible, though the leaders of the small Christian communities are seeking to ally this spirit of opposition, and with some success. The hatred and fear between these two great sections of India's population have thus far made impossible the development of any true nationalism. No one can foretell how long it will be before a truly natural type of man will appear in India, one who can sink religious, racial and linguistic differences in the interests of a common motherland. Very few, indeed, have yet risen to this height, either from among the Hindus or Mohammedans. The riots and bloodshed that have recently disgraced India's life have been due to this animosity, and, had they not been quelled, the peace of the entire land would have been threatened far more than it is menaced today by the occasional outbreaks of violence under revolutionary leaders such as those who enacted the recent tragedy at Chittagong, or the activities of the unruly tribes that made trouble at Peshawar. Unity is the greatest need of India today, and no one who does not seek to advance it can possibly be considered India's friend. Yet nothing is gained either by ignoring or denying the lack of unity. Fortunately, wise leaders of both communities are at work on this great problem.

## INDIA NOT A COUNTRY BUT A CONTINENT

India is more like a continent than a country, and lacks unity—racial, linguistic, religious, social or political. The Hindus around Madras, for example, are Dravidian by race and speak Tamil, they are of medium stature and dark in complexion, being as different from the Punjabis around Lahore as the Russian is different from the Britisher. The Punjabi has considerable Aryan blood, speaks Urdu or Punjabi,



is tall and of a dark olive complexion. The eastern and western regions show equally great divergencies, and it is a truism in India that the country has more races than Europe, with as marked difference as Europe presents. As to language, there are ten languages each with a distinct script, and each spoken by more than ten million people, and, in addition, vernaculars spoken by smaller numbers that would run the total to more than twice as many. Under these conditions, the English language alone makes possible any national gathering, whether it be political or any other type. All the leading newspapers of India are published in the English language, including Mahatma Gandhi's political organ, "Young India," although he has steadily maintained that the English language was largely responsible for destroying India's life and national institutions.

Nor should one forget that India is a land of great distances, with a country covering two thirds the area of the United States, and stretching from Montana to Maine, and from northern Canada to the Great Gulf. It is not surprising that the 320,000,000 of people, under all these complex conditions, have failed thus far to create any national unity. The only hope of achieving this is through the centralized government of Britain which holds these peoples together, and by her influence and pressure is leading them gradually to a unity that would be utterly hopeless without her. If Great Britain were weakened, confusion and civil war would set in, while if that government were withdrawn, we could not expect anything but chaos, with national and, possibly, international complications that might affect all Asia, and even Europe. Without hesitation, I make the statement that India's wisest friends do not stand for her independence of Britain's leadership today.

What the distant future may hold, one can hardly prophesy at present, but what the immediate present demands is clear to those who know the situation in India. It is the acceptance on the part of her people of the pledge given by Great Britain to grant dominion status to India's peoples at the earliest possible date, a date which must in the nature of things depend largely upon the limitations that Indian conditions entail and upon the attitude of India herself. The great body of Indian people, excluding the Revolutionary and the Non-cooperation parties, have accepted this pledge in good faith and stand today for everything that will bring it about as soon as may be possible. With this assured, India's greatest days are immediately ahead.

—*The Christian Advocate.*

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### **Dr. Rose Describes Russia**

The Rev. William Wallace Rose, D. D., of Lynn, reported to his fellow ministers at the Boston Ministers' Meeting October 27, on a trip made to Russia with the Sherwood Eddy party in the summer of 1930. Another member of the party, the Rev. Ernest Henry Carritt, of Peabody, was present and made a brief address and helped answer questions.

Mr. Brooks presided. The Rev. John Brush conducted the devotional exercises, assisted by Mrs. van Schaick at the piano.

The subject assigned Dr. Rose was "What a Minister Ought to Know about Russia." He said in part:

"To say what a minister ought to know about Russia is difficult. A minister ought to know enough about Russia to convince the members of his Ladies' Aid that the stories about the nationalization of women are wrong.

"He ought to know enough to show the Parent and Teachers' Association that in Russia young people of both sexes do not bathe together in public baths without clothing. He ought to know enough to prove to the patriotic societies that Russian communism is not being propagated to any extent in the United States, that such communism as we have is indigenous to our soil, and that the cause of communism here and abroad is human misery and injustice.

"He ought to know enough to tell art lovers with some authority that the Russians have not destroyed the art treasures of the old *regime*, but have carefully preserved them.

"He ought to know enough to convince the Chambers of Commerce that it is foolish to worry over Russian wheat, that Russia could put her wheat over here if she wanted to and give it away, that Russia is a great buyer as well as a great seller, and that all our talk of forced labor in Russia is nonsense.

"He ought to be able to answer the well-fed capitalist who remarks in an offhand way, 'It won't work,' and say that communism in Russia is a definite success, and that there is nothing on the horizon to stop that success.

"He ought to be so well informed that he can convince Bishop Wm. T. Manning and Father Walsh that the churches are running, that the blows the churches have received are richly deserved, that the old church in Russia was a scourge as much deserving to be driven out of Russia as the old political system.

"He ought to be able to paint for doctors and lawyers who take outrageous fees here, a picture of Russian doctors and lawyers whose highest reward is the knowledge that they serve the people.

"To people shocked by the brutality of the Russian system our minister ought to be able to say that there is nothing brutal in the Russian system that can not be paralleled in the life of six other great modern nations, our own included, and that there are many things good in the Russian system that can not be so paralleled.

"Our minister ought to tell those who say that the only things that work in Russia are capitalistic, that the nations that are down and out are capitalistic, and that Russia is going strong.

"To the workers of our country, on the other hand, our minister ought to be able to take the positive message that the soil of Russia is the only fruitful soil for this communistic experiment, and possibly India and China, but not the United States.

"The minister who wants to talk on Russia ought to know everything and to know that nobody knows anything about Russia. Anything I might say for or against Russia is true somewhere in that



great country. It is a land of eight million square miles of territory, and one hundred and sixty million people of all stages of development from neolithic man up to the most intellectual modern.

"It is a land of contrasts. Everything that you say must be at once balanced by the opposite assertion. If you say that some churches are destroyed you must at once say that the others are filled and crowded. If you say that churches are used as granaries or for other public purposes, you must also say that those open are in better repair than before the revolution. If you say they are turning out 50,000 tractors you must also say that most of the tractors will not work. If you say they have modern ideas of husbandry and even bathe their pigs, you must add that it costs a man a dollar to get a bath in a big hotel. If you say the worker gets sympathy, you must also say that there is no country where he needs so little pay. He doesn't have to worry about cost of schooling, sickness, old age, or lack of employment. If you say it is a land with no unemployment, you must also say it is a land where there is much terror. So also it is a land of idealism, but also of brutality. It is a paradise for workers, but a hell for the rich, the sensitive, the cultured and artistic. There is food enough, but sometimes people stand in queue to get it. If you say Russia has no money, you have to add that they have practically all the raw materials.

"Our minister ought to know that Russia is the largest country in the world, occupying one-sixth of the land, making a great experiment trying to lift the cultural level of mankind. But the Russians do not think it is an experiment, any more than Moses thought he was making an experiment when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt.

"There system is working. The evils in the system are the evils inherent in every other political system known to man. One of the good things in it is the elimination of the profit motive. We have been insisting that a man could not get along without the profit motive. The answer is that a whole generation of Russian boys and girls are being taught that the possession of more money than one needs is the crime of crimes and the sin of sins.

"There are 149 languages spoken in Russia by 182 races. It is a land of no middle class, no upper class. Practically only workers are left. All the others are killed or have escaped.

"They have a know-it-all attitude much as we have. Marx is the god and Lenin is his prophet. Lenin said, "With Soviet power and American technique, we shall build our socialist state." They are getting the American technique and they are building their state.

"In the country there are 130,000,000 peasants, 12,000,000 members of trades unions and 2,000,000 members of the Communist Party. The members of the Communist Party are zealots, atheists, at the beck and call of the party. They can be sent anywhere at any time. There are 700,000 young communists. In the Communist Party there are 1,500 members of an all union congress, 600 members of the Central Executive Council, sixteen members of the Cabinet, nine members of the inner secret political bureau, and one man, Stalin, in supreme control.

"Russian states are economic states—one devoted to iron and steel, another to cotton and textiles, another to wheat, another to automobiles, etc.

"There is something in Russia akin to a flaming religious revival that is roaring through the land. All of the members of our party, with possibly one or two exceptions, felt that they had come into the presence of the indomitable human spirit. Whatever our ideas, we all stand straighter in the presence of men who have hold on something they believe vital and who would lay down their lives to serve the cause.

"The depth and breadth of this spirit can not be described. Here is the slow phlegmatic Slav. He is transformed by this spirit into a demon for work.

"They are determined to talk religion and convince us. Their God is not our God. Communism is their religion, but they do not call it that. Yet communism has all the ear-marks of a religion. A peasant knelt before a new tractor and, crossing himself, called it the little brother of Jesus. 'We will drink carrot tea,' said one man to us, 'we will eat potato bread, but we will put this thing over.'

"The Russians are the new Puritans. They are exalting the virtues of diligence, thrift, abstinence. They set their faces sternly against drinking, against prostitution. Russia was the only great nation where we found no pornographic pictures, no prostitutes, no great drinking. It is not puritanism to them. It is just plain common sense. It is common sense to keep a man pure, temperate and efficient.

"They have a five-day week. The Russian system provides for leisure, and through a great system of parks they teach the people how to use it.

"Their prisons are graded prisons. One of our party, a rabbi, said to a prisoner, 'Do you boys like it here?' The answer was, 'Why shouldn't we like it here? We came here bums. We go away men.'"

In closing, Dr. Rose went more into detail concerning religious conditions in Russia. In the discussion which followed, it was brought out that the word "religion" was being used by different men in different senses. Dr. Rose and Mr. Carritt explained that they were using the word in the broadest possible way when they said that Communism was really a religion. When a person said that the Russian peasants were fundamentally religious, he meant that they were simple-minded people, full of awe at the thought of the unseen Powers. When one used the word religion in the sense that religion is still tolerated by the Russian Government, one meant that some churches of the Greek Orthodox Church and some dissenting churches are still open. Dr. Rose made it clear, however, that the Soviets are determined to root out religion, not so much because they are in opposition to its superstitions as because they fear its influence in stirring up revolution against the Government.



In closing, Dr. Rose said in part: "Our party visited six churches in one evening. A Russian told us that 90 per cent of the people of Russia were still affiliated in some way with organized religion. They go to church on feast days or they call in the priest in times of birth or death.

"It is clearly true that the priests are persecuted, churches are heavily taxed, the five day week disrupts the order of services, the youth of Russia are being educated as atheists, the church is forbidden to teach religion to the young, and every vital religious leader is quickly removed from the scene.

"The Soviet Government, believing the church is an anachronism that could be rooted out easily, are now puzzled by the fact that the religious instinct survives.

"We visited a museum which is designated to teach atheism. In that museum we saw why Lenin said, 'Religion is the opiate of the people.' A series of plaster plaques showed the processes of evolution, and had over it the sign, 'Religion teaches an unscientific view of life.' There were the pictures of all the idols of religious history, and of all the gods of the nations. In one place I noticed a life-sized statue of Bruno and the story of his being burned, all designed to teach that the church had been the enemy of human progress. There were pictures representing priests giving the secrets of the confessional to the agents of the secret police. On one table were the iron, steel and copper helmets, bracelets and other things of penance that the priests had made the peasants wear.

"Against religion the Soviets have tried force and tried ridicule, and they have not succeeded. Now they have started a scientific investigation of the question as to why religion persists, and it is said that the investigators have broken up into different parties. The Russian who discussed this subject with us told us he believed that the investigators would find something in man that can not be eliminated. I think it fair to say this: There is more scrutiny of religious questions, more serious thought on religion, in Russia to-day than in any other country.

"The greatest service that we in the United States can render to Russia is to help by not hindering. My visit to Russia helped me to understand, and to realize the truth of the saying that to understand much is to forgive much. I believe that the Russians are seeking for a city whose builder and maker is God."

Mr. Carritt brought out the fact that a class system is being developed to-day. Four classes of people can not vote—the merchants, the clerks in the little stores, the criminals and the clergy. He said that teachers are regarded as secondary to the men digging the ditch. He said that Russia will have to get a broader idea of what a worker is. He believed that the Russian experiment was bound to succeed.

—*The Christian Leader.*

## The Anglican Communion and Its Future

BY JAMES R. O'DANIEL

Lay Deputy to General Convention, Diocese of Dallas

History, even from sources unfriendly to Anglicanism, reveals that the Catholic Church is divided into three major parts.

Though sometimes called *branches*, discriminating terminology would perhaps prefer to designate these divisions as *parts*, for the same reason that one of the three divisions of an upstanding tree trunk into which it had been severed by being sawed upward from near the ground would be a *part* and not a *branch* of the tree.

Carrying the analogy further, a tree twenty feet in height would represent the Catholic Church, each foot representing a century in its life, and the three parts would be the Anglican communion, the Roman communion, and the Eastern Orthodox communion, respectively.

One of these openings in the tree would start about two feet from the ground, continuing upward to about seven feet, then closed until it reached the sixteenth foot, then reopened again for about three inches, then closed for about an inch, and then reopened until it reached the twentieth foot, *i. e.*, the top of the tree, respectively, representing: the early independence of the British Church from the second century to the seventh century; the union of the British with the Roman communion until the sixteenth century; then during the reign of Henry VIII the reopening of the line until the reign of Mary; the reunion of the Anglican with the Roman communion during the reign of Mary; then the reopening of the line during the reign of Elizabeth and continuing until the present day.

The other opening in the tree would start about eleven feet from the ground continuing upward until it reached the twentieth foot, *i. e.*, the top of the tree, representing the breach between the Western or Roman and Eastern Orthodox communions.

An interesting digression would be to liken the various Protestant sects in America and Great Britain with branches of the Anglican part of the tree, and the Protestant sects in Continental Europe with branches of the Roman part of the tree, and perhaps some sects in the East as being branches of the Eastern Orthodox part of the tree; but we are concerned now with the Anglican communion throughout Great Britain and the Empire and in the United States, giving honorary precedence to the Archbishop of Canterbury as primate—just as the various national or state bodies in the Eastern Orthodox communion give precedence to the Archbishop or Patriarch of Constantinople as primate.

Regardless of how it was accomplished, it remains a fact that the Archbishops, Bishops, and Priests, and the corporate body composing the Church of England, severed all relations with the then primate of the Western Church, the Bishop of Rome, in the sixteenth century, reasserting the ancient independence of that part of the Catholic Church in the Southern portion of the island of Britain—the same inde-



pendence it had enjoyed prior to the seventh century under its then primate, the Archbishop of Saint Davids and Coeur de Leon on the Usk.\*

Roman and Protestant propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding, the character of the Anglican communion since its earliest times, whether as the Church in Britain or as the Church of England, has never changed into that of a sect. And while it is true that princes of continental extraction exercised anti-sacramental influence upon it at times, coloring and modifying many of its customs, nevertheless its continuity with the past has remained unbroken.

To examine the earliest Prayer Book in English, the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, is to recognize immediately that the ancient rites, ceremonies, liturgy, sacramental-worship, threefold order of the priesthood, the fundamentals were expressly retained, although the use of the Latin was discontinued. Subsequently revisions have not altered this fact.

Notwithstanding the lessons of history there are certain Liberals of the Anglican group who either will not face the facts, or who do not have the consciousness of being communicants of the ancient Catholic Church or, having such consciousness, consider it of little or no moment; or because of bias openly disclaim their ancient heritage and prefer to be grouped with the various Protestant sects that do not even have the same conception of the fundamental terms *Church, Altar, Sacraments, Apostolic Succession of Bishops*, and so on.

Clinging onto the shell of Anglicanism, these so-called Liberals easily become lost to Protestant sects, because their conception of the Church is inconsistent with the Church's own position established throughout the ages. And to them every ceremony, no matter how ancient, no matter whether it was used by the early British Church or by the Eastern Orthodox communion—if it also happens to be used by the Roman communion—can mean nothing less than a *drift to Rome*.

Then there are those unenlightened Churchmen who, being unable to defend the Catholicity of the Church by reason of their own lack of training, in their zeal to impress the world that they also are *Catholics*, toady to Rome.

Then there are those more enlightened Churchmen, deficient in poise, equilibrium, and stability, lacking the courage to stand up in the face of unreasoning Protestant prejudice against their Anglo-Catholicism, who easily become lost to the Roman communion.

The advocacy of things Roman, simply because they are Roman, and the advocacy of things Protestant (whatever that negative term may mean) simply because they are Protestant, can lead only to disintegration of the Anglican communion, resulting in its absorption on the one hand by the Roman communion, and on the other by the Protestant sects.

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\* See Thiery's *Norman Conquest*.

One of the causes of defections to other religious bodies may be traced to the unintelligent preparation and training of scholars in Church schools in a knowledge of the history of the Church and of its historical position. Also teachers in Church schools are too often *slack* Churchmen, inculcating into the minds of the scholars that it is of little importance whether they are Anglicans or not; and parents who, because it may be a little more convenient, send their children to Sunday schools of other religious bodies are also sowing the seeds of defection.

What then of the future? The perpetuation of the Anglican communion, as such, may depend to a great extent upon better training of its scholars in Church Schools, and upon better training of its candidates for Confirmation, and also upon the inculcation among Churchmen of a recognition of the self-sufficiency of the Anglican communion; the cultivation, development, and practice among its communicants of a spirit of independence and dignity—not of arrogance—which should be fostered by a consciousness that, as one of the three parts of the ancient Church, it is built upon solid foundations and is totally adequate for all religious purposes; and while it is tolerant and kindly toward Rome and the Protestant sects, it is no mere loosely constructed organization invented for the sole purpose of providing a common meeting ground for these divergent organizations, but it is a strong, virile, historic, impregnable institution looking with equal disfavor upon Roman innovations and Protestant deviations.

—*The Living Church.*

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### The Outlook for War and Peace \*

WILLIAM WALLACE ROSE

*They have healed the hurt of my people slightly, saying peace, peace, when there is no peace.*—Jeremiah 6: 14.

Jeremiah has acquired the reputation of a dolorous prophet, but he was not so much a pessimist as he was a realist. He lived in a tough-minded time. The accredited leaders of Judah had gone crazy. The nation had been hurt deeply and they had treated the wound slightly. With lovely phrases they had covered ugly facts. They said "All's well, all's well," when they knew all was not well. Jeremiah knew it. Jeremiah told it. He received the prophet's reward of derision; his cure was greeted with contempt. But history has justified his prophetic wisdom. He predicted the overthrow of Jerusalem. It came and Judah passed out of existence as a political state. The Babylonian exile closed that period in the history of a proud people who had been told and who believed peace, peace, when there was no peace; because justice faltered and force ruled.

Our theme is the outlook for war and peace. Twelve years ago the armistice was signed. An armistice is not peace. An armistice is a

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\* Sermon preached in the First Universalist Church of Lynn, Mass. Dr. Rose spent two months last summer in a study tour of Europe with the Sherwood Eddy seminar.



truce—a temporary cessation of hostilities between contending forces. It may lead to permanent peace or to a resumption of hostilities. Our armistice led to a peace treaty—to the disarmament and dismemberment of arrogant militarism, blind monarchy, and the iron hand of force. It gave breathing space for a federation of nations, for the establishment of popular governments and for covenants recognizing the ideal of right over might. So far, so good. The moral forces of mankind have had a decade in which to “make the world safe for democracy.” That famous phrase, worn thin by much use, is still significant. A world in which democracy is safe must be a world armed only to the point of maintaining international law and order. It must be a world in which the people’s will is supreme. It must be a world whose will is to keep the peace. It must be a world where justice comes first. It must be a world of neighbors and not of rival bandits.

We do not as yet live in that kind of world. We say peace, peace, but there is no peace—only a truce. This is not pessimism; this is realism. It was to be expected. The wound of the World War was deep. The hurt has been healed slightly. Nobody can study our times without understanding what H. G. Wells meant when he said recently: “Another war is inevitable in Europe in eight years—maybe sooner in the Near East. It may break in 1931 or 1932.” Let us look at the facts.

To begin with, Europe is more fully armed to-day than in 1914. We can dispense with figures and accept the fact. More men are under arms in Europe to-day than ever before in its history. Corroborative evidence of Mr. Well’s prophecy is found in additional facts. France is walling herself in behind fortifications 200 miles long and twenty miles deep. This line of steel and concrete guards her entire pregnable border. Italy maneuvers her black-shirted army on the French Alpine border and calls for the redress of her wrongs. The Germans are uneasy and, in spite of the peace treaty’s prohibition of arms, have a large fighting force camouflaged in various ways. The Balkan states are seething with discontent. England has her brawling children in India, Egypt, Iraq and Jerusalem. And Russia frowns over them all. Not one of these states professes to want war. All of them signed the Pact of Paris outlawing war. But note this paradox. Since we live in a world hypothetically warless, war-proof, since fifty-five nations have renounced war as an instrument of national policy, what is the function of armies and navies and fortifications? Is it for war? War is gone. Is it for peace? Then why the endless parleys as to the size and strength of armaments? To jumble two Shakespearian quotations, we look on this picture and on that and suspect something rotten in the state of Europe! Europe wants peace as any man wants health. Yet in the healthiest man may be focal points of infection. Europe has its danger zones. *The peace of Europe to-day is at the mercy of an accident even as in 1914.*

Let us look at these danger zones. One is Russia. Russia is stirring up trouble in Europe. Her strategy is openly proclaimed—to

foment discontent and take advantage of existing disorder. Soviet Russia believes that whatever advances war or revolution in other countries is of advantage to the spreading of communism. The letters U. S. S. R. mean the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Under that international designation she is ready to welcome Germany or any other distracted state. Russia, Finland and Poland are constantly at odds. I saw the only electrified barbed-wire boundry line in Europe—between Russia and Poland.

Russia is not the only state which contends that there is much hypocrisy in the peace talk of Europe. Mussolini says the same. Mussolini knows that Europe can never have peace while the Treaty of Versailles remains unaltered. He told our party this summer that the treaty had already been modified: the Kaiser was not hanged, the Rhineland had been evacuated prior to the evacuation date in the Treaty. Mussolini desires further modifications that will favor Italy. He predicts a coming European war which will find the continent divided between fascist and anti-fascist nations. Italy, like Soviet Russia, is trying to create a psychological situation in which war becomes inevitable. Italy, like Russia, believes itself to be ringed around by deadly enemies. Italy, like Russia, claims its military preparations are for the sole purpose of defense.

Move now into Germany, where enormous trouble is on the make. The United States recently held an election in which millions of voters shifted power from Republicans to Democrats without materially altering their own political views or materially changing the nation's policies. But the recent German election recorded a vote of six million for the Hitler fascist program which repudiates the debts and offers the German people a violent way out of their troubles. Two years ago this same Hitler polled less than one million votes. In two years German discontent increased the extremist vote 600 per cent! At the present rate, another two years will find this echo of Mussolini in command, and the German communists running him a close second.

What ails Germany? Unemployment, taxes to meet reparation debts, loss of colonies and provinces—all these. Plus two specific irritations. One is the loss of East Prussia, now beyond the Polish border and separated from the homeland by the Polish corridor. Germany accepts the loss of Alsace-Lorraine with good grace. She took it one time from France, anyway. It's all in the game. But East Prussia is German of the Germans. East Prussia is hemmed in by unfriendly peoples. Germany feels as we in New England would feel if Canada had made successful war on the United States, claimed as trophy the port of Boston and created a sixty-mile-wide arm of the Dominion reaching from, say, Ontario to Massachusetts Bay. East Prussia is isolated even as New England would be in such an arrangement. East Prussia is desperate and Germany is irreconcilable, even as New England and the rest of the United States would be in the supposititious case.

Germany's other major claim to a revision of the treaty is her war guilt. This, she says, is a lie. She demands an international com-



mission to give an unbiased judgment as to her share of responsibility for the Great War. The Germans will maintain this agitation until some international body has reviewed the evidence now available, but unpublished when the treaty was written. And the nations which have profited by the treaty will fight to the last against reopening that question. To reopen it will mean the sure modification of the treaty, and all the political and economic arrangements based on the treaty—which would mean the unsettlement of Europe again. The simple fact, known to historians and students of the Great War, is that Germany was not the sole instigator of that tragedy. Her punishment as the sole instigator rankles, and we are watching the slowly ripening fever of that infection.

Moving southeast to the Balkans we find another danger zone. Rumania is gorged by the trophies of the Great War. This relatively backward people—the people who support that prize pair Queen Marie and King Carol—rule over cultured Hungarians, Austrians, Russians, Germans, and Bulgarians. It is as though Texas were given back to Mexico, and Texans required to bow the knee to Mexican rule, Mexican standards of government and education. These minorities in Rumania have a significant slogan—"Never, no never."

This is an incomplete list of the danger zones in Europe to-day, but it will suffice to show that Europe is talking peace but thinking war. They talk of equality and parity in arms. But it is parity in war-machines, not in peace measures. They promise never to fight, then begin to measure and compare the tools of battle. If it were not the grimmest business on earth and the most dangerous, this spectacle would be the funniest human antic since Henry Ford sailed to get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas. What would Jesus think of a world in which sensible and honorable men talk peace and prepare for war—talk peace and sanction injustices—talk peace and permit an accident to bring war? What would Jeremiah say? Has the hurt of the world been healed, slightly? Do we comfort ourselves murmuring peace, peace, when there is no peace? Have we in the Treaty of Versailles an air-tight bandage which covers a deep, ragged, festering wound? Any realistic survey of the outlook for war and peace in Europe must start with these grim facts.

There are some facts not so grim. The League of Nations is a powerful peace agent in Europe and it grows in scope and favor. The World Court is a true arm of international justice. Both these devices are blessed safety-valves and have already prevented several armed clashes that might have spread to war. But neither the League nor the Court is in a position to place the terms of the Treaty of Versailles on the table for reconsideration. And the Treaty of Versailles is the villain of the piece. Designed and signed by victor nations at the close of a holocaust, its purpose it to keep prone a vanquished enemy. Like the Bourbons, the Treaty learns nothing and forgets nothing. And Europe to-day needs understanding and reconciliation.

If war in eight years, why not to-day? Because of war's terrific

cost, its moral ugliness, the honor of nations signatory to the Pact of Paris, and the hope of justice being done eventually. The spirit of the Kaiser's contemptuous reply to Lord Grey's offer of arbitration in 1914—"Have we fallen as low as that!"—is gone. The arbitration of differences is regarded everywhere abroad as an honorable procedure. This is the brightest sign in the Old World. None the less, the soreness at the points I indicate is being aggravated by an arbitration-hope deferred, making the heart sick and the mind see red.

And what is the answer? Does the logic of events point to greater and more effective armaments? But, see, Europe and the world were never so well armed and never so insecure! Or does the logic of events point to more justice? Does it ask for a magnanimity such as the world has never witnessed? Mankind stands at the fork of the roads marked Force-and-War; Justice-and-Peace.

Some day the Treaty of Versailles will be revised, the war debts will be canceled or greatly modified, and the iniquitous boundary lines of to-day readjusted. Some day Germany will be exonerated as the sole instigator of the Great War. Some day Europe will be federated somewhat after the lines of our own federal union. Some day Europe and the world will prepare for peace in time of peace. Some day the League of Nations and the World Court will function as smoothly over there as our own federal Constitution and our Supreme Court function over here. Some day the international boundary lines of Europe will be as free of military arms as the international border between the United States and Canada. Some day the genius for government that is Great Britain, the beauty that is France, the scientific thoroughness that is Germany, the passion for social welfare that is Russia, the song and laughter that is Italy, and the practical idealism that is America, will be at the service of mankind without amendments and reservations.

Whether that "some day" will follow another devastating war or will be wrung from a stiff-necked, war-minded people as the sole price of peace, I do not know. The issue is in the laps of the gods. Men seem for the moment to have abdicated their reason. What can we do meanwhile? We can watch. The World War broke on the American mind as a bolt from the blue. Our ignorance of Europe in 1914 was pathetic. We had been clinging to our slogan, "No entangling alliances," and we became belatedly tangled between two hostile alliances that shattered the world we were so comfortable in. To be forewarned is to be fore-armed. We have signed the pacts. Our moral influence abroad is tremendous. We are the amazing Americans! We can think peace and talk peace and demand the simple justice that ensures peace, and Europe will listen. We can set an example. We can join the World Court. We can maintain our armed forces at the minimum required for police protection. We can cancel or modify the debts owed us on the promise of debtor nations that they, too, will forgive their debtors and cease preparing for war. We can take our tariffs out of the control of politicians and give them into the keeping of economists with a world view of economic laws and retributions.



These are startling proposals, I know. But I am talking about the outlook for war and peace. This is the price of peace. And remember, another war like the last will do all these things whether we like them or not! Another war will wipe out all the debts, all the tariffs, all the foreign trade, all the unjust boundaries, all the armaments, all the peace pacts, all the treaties, all the leagues and such wealth as still exists unmortgaged. Another war like the last will wipe out civilization as we know it. Do we care? If we care we will help redress the wound of the last war and bring the patient that healing which the world can neither give nor take away—the peace of God. The peace of God in Jesus. The peace of reconciliation. The peace of those who are ready at last to live together in a world of neighbors instead of a world of rival bandits.—*Christian Leader*.

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### American Church?

Prayers for the union of all the Presbyterian and Reformed organizations in the land (Time, Feb. 10; June 9) were answered at Pittsburgh last week. Representatives of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Northern), Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern), United Presbyterian Church of North America, Reformed Church in America (Dutch), and Reformed Church in the U. S. (German) agreed on the principles of such union. The five bodies will each vote on the matter at their next general assemblies and synods.

Under chairmanship of Dr. William James Reid, Jr. of Pittsburgh, a United Presbyterian, the delegates urged a unified theology based on their several standards—the Westminster Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter catechism, doctrinal statement of the U. P. Church, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of the Synod of Dort and the Belgic Confession.

The new Church's goal would be "the establishment of the Kingdom of God in all the Earth." It would shun "all political alliances and entanglements and other associations that would tend to lower its spiritual tone and to subtract from its spiritual power."

Simple are the merging of educational and missionary equipment. Not so simple is the merging of church organizations. The Pittsburgh conferees urged time and latitude for this process. The Presbyterian subsidiaries of the new Church might retain their "sessions," the Reformed subsidiaries their "consistories." Consistories and sessions differ more in name than in function. Presbyteries or "classes" (larger groupings which include sessions and consistories, respectively) in a particular region need merge organization, equipment and endowment only if they wish.

A remaining impediment to the union, more ethical than actual, is the merger negotiations which the Reformed Church in the U. S. has been conducting with the Evangelical Synod of North America. Those negotiations might be dropped, as similar Reformed dealings with the United Brethren in Christ have been dropped, or, what seemed more

likely last week, the United Brethren and the Evangelicals might be assimilated into the Presbyterian-Reformed association.

Greatest question of all, of course—for the wealth of these five or seven churches is vast—is: Who shall manage the new, unified Church, and how? A special committee will try to have an acceptable answer ready by next spring.

Name of the amalgamated Church is another undecided problem. There are two existing bodies whose unwieldy names might be adopted or simplified—"Alliance of Reformed Churches Throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian System," and "The General Council of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in America." But pat, handy, attractive was a name suggested last week: the American Church, a term not yet appropriated by any worshipping band.—*Time*.





## Book Review

NOTE—Reviews, when not signed, are by the Editor.  
(When ordering books, please mention this Magazine.)

**The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity** by John Baillie, Professor of Systematic Theology in Emmanuel College, Toronto. New York, Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1929—219 pages, \$2.00.

The author endeavors to restate our Christian convictions about Jesus Christ, "avoiding the perplexing difficulties in the traditional presentation while yet losing hold of none of the great insights into spiritual truth which lie embedded within that presentation." Since the modern mind balks especially at the usual interpretation of such doctrines as the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement, the writer gives most of his attention to these matters.

It doesn't require a great deal of observation to notice the modern estrangement from the traditional "epic of salvation." The trinitarian view of God as "one essence in three persons," the two natures in Christ, the death of Christ as the way of making it possible for God to forgive the sinner—these and many other things strike the man of today as stumbling blocks in the path of faith. There is a widespread renaissance of interest in Jesus as the supreme character in human history, and in the Christian religion as a way of life, but the theological doctrines of orthodoxy are rejected by our poets, our youth and by the heathen world.

How can we meet these objections? We feel that there lies hidden in this tale of Christ, the divine Savior, the purest gold of truth if we could only so present it as to make it acceptable to those who follow enlightened reason as their only guide. It would not do to say, with Hegel, that the Christian religion offers truth in the form of symbolical representation while philosophy gives it in the terms of concept. This would evidently reduce the Christian religion to mythology.

For us Jesus lived and died actually, he was a historic person and we believe in a "Heilsgeschichte." He was the founder of the Christian religion, mediating to his followers the fellowship with God and with their brother-Christians. To him we owe the fullest understanding and realization of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Christ's person and influence is responsible for the Christian ethical ideal as well as for their confidence in God as their loving father. He is the pioneer of the Christian "Way," the first-born of the Christian brotherhood, the first "Christian." He is preeminently a "teacher," the teacher of moral and spiritual truth; but more than a teacher.

The gospel is a story, not a treatise. Christ's personal influence awoke the faith in his followers.

Here the author enters into the controversy concerning the religion of Jesus and the religion about Jesus. The moderns say the gospels show us what the religion *of* Jesus was; Paul, on the other hand, elaborates a religion *about* Jesus, he is the founder of Christian theology. We must return to the religion of Jesus, must learn from Christ, not from Paul. The writer, while acknowledging the difference in view-point and emphasis, contends that Paul did not falsify Jesus' teaching; all the Pauline developments were already contained in Christ's gospel, in the root. Paul, in his message of divine grace and salvation by faith, builds on the gospel teaching of the father's love for the penitent sinner. Even the redeeming force of Christ's death was foretold in the words of the Lord Himself.

Taking up now more particularly, the subject mentioned above, he deals first with the doctrine of the Trinity. There is, he says, in the New Testament nothing taught about an ontological triad of persons in the deity; and nothing is gained by a philosophical discussion of the relation and function of the three persons in the divine being. We can only say that historically the process of the divine self-revelation finds its culmination in Jesus Christ, and that the Spirit of Christ became in some way the spirit of the Christian. Therefore—and in this sense—the Christian faith was one in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The doctrine that there is a certain threefoldness in the very nature of God himself, is not in the New Testament.

Reviewer cannot say that the writer has cleared up the question of the Trinity much to his thinking. Let us remember however, what Saint Augustine says about this subject and about those who want to dip up the divine sea with the small cup of their own reason.

On the Incarnation the author, while saying much about God being in Christ and so answering the human search for God, says nothing about the virgin birth and about the way how Christ came to be the image of God and God's son. Christ's function was not, he says, to show that he, Christ, was divine, but rather that God was like him.

To the Atonement the writer devotes a great deal of effort. He says, the cross is the culmination of Christ's forgiving love, the most irresistible force in the spiritual world for the destruction of evil and for the redemption of man. It spurs us on to a like redemptive activity towards others. It throws a light upon the nature of God, which is redeeming love. "God in his wisdom knew that nothing could avail to redeem us from our sinful ways but the spectacle of One, in whom was the fulness of his own love, suffering a shameful death as a direct result of his passion to redeem us. And in his great love he provided such a redemption."

The author throughout the book displays a great willingness to go as far as possible in meeting the modern spirit. He finds truth everywhere, in Judaism and in Buddhism and as far as human aspirations have gone out in search for the deity. He will not let difference



of opinion break Christian fellowship. He gives up some things which we hold, e. g. the threefoldness of nature in the deity, the pre-existence of Christ and Christ's double nature. Nevertheless he strives earnestly and honestly not to let go what seems to him vital in the Christian faith. His book, therefore, will be read with interest and profit by all those who look and labor towards a reconciliation between the old and the new faith, or, at least, toward a sympathetic discussion of controversial subjects.

**The Rediscovery of Jesus**, by *Fred Merrifield*, Asst. Professor of New Testament History and Interpretation, University of Chicago. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1929—270 pages.

It is a fundamental claim of modern theology that the traditional picture of Jesus is a caricature. Instead of the simple preacher of righteousness and his gospel of the love of God and man it puts before us a heavenly being who became man, having now a two-fold nature. By his life of obedience and his vicarious death he atoned for the sins of man and reconciled God to the world. The father, as a reward of his faithful life and redeeming sacrifice, raised him from the dead and made him share in his omnipotent powers. The God-man now uses them for the salvation of the sinful man and for the bringing in his kingdom. This conception of Jesus dominated the minds of men for many centuries. It was taken over by the Reformers without change or abatement. The critical study of the bible however, now carried on through 150 years, has changed all this and given us back the real Jesus and his simple gospel. The modern mind, on the other hand, feels that the day of miracles and divine revelation has passed and that it can accept only a Jesus who was a man like we are and had a truly human development. This kind of Jesus modern theology has discovered by a study of the historic sources, and it is its confident assurance that in time he will make a way for himself everywhere.

Such is the position and spirit of the book before us. According to its author the heavy mists of tradition are slowly rising. Jesus is the most misunderstood of the men of history. Even in the gospel accounts we have only the cherished traditions of a long-idealized past. Their pictures are drawn in the heavy colors of Oriental imagery. In gathering the records of Jesus' life the original lines of the story were obliterated and the imaginary hero and folk-pictures were substituted. When later the creeds of the church were worked out, heathen philosophy and heathen mystery cults were allowed to affect the faith of the church altogether too deeply. If only the church fathers had been satisfied with the simplicity of Jesus instead, if only they had known that Jesus, the Jew, could only be understood as a Jew among the Jews.

But, fortunately, modern scholars have come to the rescue. They have gone back of the theology of the church to the original sources. More than that, they have, even in these sources, separated the earlier

picture of Jesus from later accretions and distortions. They have studied the history of his time and his environment and are now able to show what kind of a man Jesus was and how he came to be what he was.

The author now describes how, by the study of the prophets, Jesus himself became one of them. Amos taught him that God is interested in the religion of righteousness and mercy, not in sacrifices. Jeremiah inspired him with his own entire consecration, etc. To scripture Jesus added the habits of a prayerful life. To cap it all, he came under the influence of John the Baptist. The two formed a friendship of rare beauty and strength. Jesus for a time had no other plan for his future aside from the fortunes of John and under his leadership. Both believed in divine intervention as necessary to establish the kingdom. John's message was not as to whether Christ was the Messiah, for whom both were looking (!). The claims that Jesus was divine are of a later origin. Jesus himself never gave a hint of out-ranking his teacher (the book calls John Jesus' master").

Jesus, then, in a perfectly human development, became a prophet. His healing powers were those of a personality of great strength. He helped insane people to recover their balance; he helped sick people to get well by his own heroic faith in man's right to the full powers of health and happiness.

His nature was one where calm optimism was uppermost. He was a man of utmost sincerity; a friend of the friendless, but he sternly rejected the Christ title. When Peter toward the end encouraged him to start on the violent course of the Messiah of the Jewish hopes, he rebuked him saying, "Let me never, never hear you call me Messiah!" The traditional picture of Jesus, of course, is different but it is that of the second, third and later centuries. Jesus never claimed to be sinless, God alone is good, he said.

But the forces of law and order, of religious formality and conformity, the interests of ecclesiasticism, of political expediency, etc. rose against him and brought about his arrest, conviction and death. By the way, the author takes great interest in Judas, the traitor. He even says, that Judas' death was to be his greatest tribute to Jesus' name—a last futile effort to atone for a terrible wrong.

Jesus died on the cross, undefeated as to his faith in God and love for man. To the disciples it was a crushing blow. Nevertheless, only for a short time. Then Peter has a "dream-vision" of the Master, he seemed to be with him, alive and powerful. Others had similar visions. They felt his Presence and came to believe that he had actually visited them. Hence the resurrection stories. Then the disciples began to spread the story of their Lord.

Has the Galilean won? asks the writer in conclusion. He has not won as yet. But he will come into his own when the world learns to know how thoroughly human and virile he was in the days of his flesh. Ancient forms of thought are fast fading from the picture. Jesus will live because he was a real man, not a God. His faith that



all men, even those of weakened wills and unfortunate inheritance, may rise by the sheer determination to conquer themselves and their environment, puts victory into the human blood. Love for God kept him at his best, love for man kept his nature sweet and eminently practical. Call him no longer the Prince of Peace, call him the Friend and Brother of Man, for that place he filled, and is destined to fill for ages to come.

So that is the Jesus the author has rediscovered. We think he has no reason to be proud of his discovery. The Jesus he discovered would never have been able to do the things the Jesus of the Bible has done. This modern Jesus never existed, for to separate all the features from the record that are not in conformity with modern views and to say, this is the original Jesus, is wholly arbitrary. E. g. to say Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah; to declare he warned his disciples never, never call me Messiah again—is in contradiction of plain and undisputed passages of the record.

Moreover, the spiritual experience of every sound Christian tells him that Jesus is more than a mere prophet. The devotional literature of all the ages and its sacred hymns multiply and corroborate our individual experience a hundred-fold. Scholarship alone is entirely unable to prove or disprove that Christ was divine. What is hidden from the wise and prudent, God has revealed to the childlike receptiveness of those whom the scholars would call mere "babes."

**Objectives in Religious Education**, by *Paul H. Vieth*, Superintendent of Educational Administration—The International Council of Religious Education. Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1930, New York—331 pages.

There has been a decided increase of interest in religious education in the last decade. In the past, Sunday Schools have often been satisfied with the transmission of knowledge. The Uniform Lessons took the pupil through the Bible in a course of four years in order to acquaint him with the main contents of the book. This was followed by the Graded Courses, where the choice of lessons and topics was adapted to the age of the pupil. No doubt an improvement on the former plan. However, it was always felt that the purpose of the Sunday School was not fulfilled by the study of the biblical material, but that religious growth was the real object of instruction. The pupil must "accept Jesus Christ" and become a member of the church. To help bring this about Decision days were introduced. Here the pupil was given a chance to confess his faith in Christ and join his church. The Sunday School has doubtless to accomplish these two things. But the two—individual faith and church membership—involve so many other obligations that a thorough study of their implications is needed to give a clear conception of the method and the goal of Sunday School teaching. Such a study—a study of the objectives of religious education—is undertaken in this book. The author

says correctly that a study of the results to be obtained in religious teaching will have a great influence on the methods to be employed. If we know the destination, the goal, we will be in a position to find the quickest way to that goal.

In the first five chapters Vieth speaks in a general way on the nature and function of the objectives of religious education. Then he passes on to the task of naming these objectives and showing how to realize them.

The author lays no claim to original work. He does not evolve these objectives out of his own mind and experience. No; by a referendum to 213 professors he obtained the names of ten religious teachers who rank highest in the country. They are: Jos. M. Artman, W. Scott Athern, Geo. H. Betts, W. C. Bower, Geo. A. Coe, H. F. Cope, Hugh Hartshorn, N. E. Richardson, Theo. G. Soares, Luther Allan Weigle. Then another questionnaire was sent out to four hundred and thirty-four persons who were supposed to be qualified, and from these answers a list of the seven objectives was put together which were rated as most essential. These seven objectives and what the above named ten leaders say about them, form the main content of the book. The objectives are: God-relationship; Jesus Christ; Christ-like character; the Good Society; Christian Life Philosophy; the Church; Race Heritage.

The religious education leaders are, as a rule, adherents of Liberal Christianity. E. g.: In Jesus Christ, they say, we discover the highest moral and religious ideal; he is the true revelation of God; through him fulness of life is found. Very good, as far as it goes; but how about the miraculous element in the gospel? How about his resurrection? How about his divinity and so forth. Vieth says, leave the dogmas aside and wait until the pupil's mind has ripened and is able to make his own choice among varying theological views. Under "Christian Life Philosophy" the conflict between science and faith is discussed; such questions raised as, Is the universe friendly? Is there a divine providence? Is there room for the miraculous, the supernatural? The answers are mostly taken from Luther Weigle, the most orthodox of the ten leaders. He feels sure that it will be possible to convince the growing pupil that there is a loving power above and around us.

The author has performed a laborious and useful task. It seems hard to discuss such a subject in an interesting way. The number of those who can make pedagogy (general or religious) as appealing as W. James did psychology, is very small. A more plentiful supply of illustrations would have made the treatise more attractive. Still, to bring together ten leading men on the objectives in religious education is a meritorious undertaking. Teachers in Sunday School and in Christian colleges will find the volume a helpful handbook in their work. To read a chapter at a time, not the whole book, would yield good returns.



**Ourselves and Our Emotions.** A practical study of the behavior of the primitive element of the mind, by W. Chas. Loosmore, of Glasgow University. London, John Murray, 1928—241 pages.

The author rightly contends for a high place to be given to our emotions. He goes so far as to say that all that has been accomplished in science, commerce, sociology, literature and art received its first impulse from the emotional side of the mind. It is wise that we should be enlightened by knowledge and governed by reason. But we need more than that. The heart has many reasons which reason never knows, says Pascal. Life is more than logic, and experience is deeper than philosophy. The British hide their emotions and they apologize for them. There is indeed much to be said about the evils of emotionalism. On the other hand, emotions may be controlled, directed and cultivated, and then they will serve as the regenerating forces of the mind. So the author, in this book, first undertakes to show the play and function of the emotions in our life, then he goes on to show how they may be cultivated, ennobled and made our best friends.

It is a great asset to begin life with a rich, generous emotional nature, always provided that we learn, early, how to correct our emotions by our thought and how to translate both into power and deed. "To feel the goodness of life is the way to believe in it." Such feelings have the strength to uplift and to inspire. One way to cause them to flower in us is the study of the best literature. Poets and writers express the deepest feelings that we all have without having the gift to lend them form. Remember, however, that the test of a man's life is not how or what he feels, so much as what he is and actually does.

To live well, it is best not to think too much about it, but to do the thing nearest to hand, as best we can, and so absorb our emotions in the interest which is bound to follow. In this matter of emotional self-control good habits are more to be desired than single victories, in special circumstances, because good habits mean victory all along the line. The need of our age is the cultivation of simpler habits, less expensive conveniences and a greater curbing of the craving for the costly and the rare.

A deep and general desire for romance would seem to be one of the characteristics of our time. Let us not forget that there is romance here and everywhere where there is a heart free from despair and a mind that looks beyond. To be able to keep the bloom on one's emotions, this is romance, this is life. Romance is not something over there so much as something right here. Adventure—which is another word for romance—meets us quite as often in stepping down as in climbing up.

In the second part of the book the writer illustrates in a number of types how feeling and emotion may disfigure and enfeeble the mind and, incidentally, how emotional control may enrich and beautify it. The types discussed are the conscientious objector, the fanatic, the sentimentalist, the day dreamer and the saint. With great skill he

describes and analyses the play of the emotions in these various cases, recognizing what is good and pointing out where the proper balance was lost or feeling was not guided by good reasoning and a willingness to learn that changing circumstances require adequate adjustment.

The author has given us an interesting book and made out a good case for the value of the emotions. He has also shown conclusively that emotional control is one of our first needs and that such need can be attended to by means of training and practice. He has written several books on similar subjects, he is familiar with the subject and writes with a skillful hand.

**Signs of These Times.** The Ayer Lectures of the Colgate Rochester Divinity School for 1929 by W. L. Sperry, Dean of the Theological School in Harvard University. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Garden City, New York, 1929, 179 pages.

In these lectures the author outlines the position of Liberal Protestantism on a number of mooted points in modern American Christianity. His standpoint is of the conciliatory, inclusive kind. Like Charles Gilkey, he thinks it is not necessary over against other views to take the "either-or" attitude, but rather the "both-and." What we need, he claims, is a wisdom that enables us where creed and culture seem to clash, to find a reconciliation. According to him, Jesus himself possessed such wisdom in the superlative degree. Partly because he was the "mature product of a long racial discipline in religion," and partly by intuition, he was able to separate the wheat and the chaff, the essential and the unessential, the permanent and the temporary, the heart of religion and its outward form.

We also, have back of us a long experience of religious history, whether we think of Europe or even of America only. It would be foolish to expect that our attitude toward religious questions should not have changed. There are such who repeat the creeds and profess opinions held by their ancestors, with a fervor as though they still were their own. In reality they are only "posing." Not that they want to deceive; they consider it a matter of loyalty. They would, however, serve the cause of the church better if they honestly confessed where their views have changed. Some still use the name of God when it is to them no more than "the ghost of an idea with a kind of spectral life in their minds."

In this age of science Liberal Protestantism has found it necessary to revise many features of its belief. It was impossible to keep faith and knowledge in two separate water-tight compartments and many are dreaming of a time not far distant, when the hatchet will be buried between the church and the world and the church will be satisfied to cooperate with the other factors of civilization. The author does not share this optimistic faith. The church, of course, may cooperate with the state or community in all kinds of philanthropic work. But it should not see its highest duty in cooperation with the spirit of the age. Non-cooperation and non-conformity are necessary



to the permanent life of the church. With the spirit of the time materialism and worldliness may enter the church. At such times the church needs saints and ascetics who go too far towards the other extreme but are apt to restore the balance.

The history of the church shows that the law of alternation has been at work always. The pendulum has been swinging from one extreme to the other, or to express it in Hegelian terms: thesis has been followed by antithesis, to find its mean in synthesis. It is the part of wisdom so to approach the contradictory elements in the church's life today: to find truth in either side but not the whole truth. We may side with one party or the other, according to our bent. Remember though, you haven't the whole truth, therefore cultivate sweet reasonableness.

Another of the "mooted points" is the right relation between individualism and the social aspects of our faith. There is a great deal of individual ethics in Jesus' teaching, but there is also the kingdom of God in it. In American history individualism has played a very important part. Today, however, the social implications of the gospel demand recognition everywhere. We are in danger of stressing these so much that individual "soul-winning" is often neglected. Outward work takes the place of prayer; institutionalism provides a poor soil for the growth of "saints." It is well here to bear in mind that great movements or even institutions are only the "lengthened shadows of great personalities." St. Francis saw even in his life time his order lose its piety, and he left it to know again "the self-sufficing power of solitude."

"Humanism" is another "sign of the times" that requires discussion. This view that all there is really in religion is what is in man, has grown considerably since the war. The destruction of thirty million lives was something that one could not square well with the faith in a loving and powerful God. That the universe was friendly was hard to maintain against the ethical indifference of the cosmic forces. In the author's opinion the religion of the future will be the one that deals adequately with the problem of evil. To deny it (Christian Science) will be impossible in the long run. To recognize the reality of evil, but to oppose it with the "will of goodness" as the Humanists propose to do, without any divine faith or help, is an attitude that race experience seems to proclaim hopeless.

The Christian interpretation, that all things including evil must work together for good, and that godliness therefore, has the promise of this life and of that which is to come, has had a noble history, stretching through millenniums. It is impossible to demonstrate the truth of the Christian conviction. Still, can we get along without its basic faith, which is: I belong to God; God is there; God cares? The fact that there is human sympathy, in friends, in churches, in society, does it not justify the faith that there is a similar sentiment in the total scheme of things?

The book closes with a chapter on mysticism. The author treats the mystics, who have that childlikeness that Jesus praises so highly, and which consists in unself-consciousness and in the capacity of wonder, very sympathetically. From the mystics, says the writer, we can learn this attitude of wonder and, again, of trust, and of humility. These are the ground of a religious character and the method of the religious life. When man stands in such attitudes before the universe, there is the substance of all his latent religion and the promise of his mature religion.

The book counsels its readers to have an open mind to new truth; not to condemn at once but to examine; not to be reactionary but to go forward. Its position as stated is that of liberal Protestantism. Nevertheless it is careful to save what is good in the old; such as non-conformity with the world, inwardness, God-consciousness. The writer is very anxious to see some good in all movements and schools. He is not ready to adopt or propose any new system of theology. We have read the book with interest. It is written in easy popular style; by a man abreast of the times. He does not follow the battle to all the places where there is a real issue, but as far as he goes he speaks words of wisdom and leads us with a gentle hand.

**Christianity and Success**, by *Edwin Holt Hughes* (Bishop of the M. E. Church and at one time president of De Pauw University), Nashville, Tenn. Cokesbury Press, 1929.

Success is the word to conjure with in America, and if we investigate what kind of success is sought by the multitude, its nature would be found to be material. Americans have not in the past been philosophers or artists. The "compulsion of a continent called us to be builders"; whatever else we are, we are not a contemplative people. Our victories are victories in the field of industry. We produce more goods than any other people. All of Europe as well as the rest of the American continent is afraid and jealous of our competition. We are proud of our achievement. The question is, can we be successful and Christians at the same time, or, to put it in the form the title of the book has it, "Is Christianity a help or a hindrance to true Success?"

True success, according to the writer, is "the prosperous termination of such attempts as deal with wise and righteous tasks under pure and generous motives and react favorably upon men's bodies, minds and spirits."

The Old Testament often seems to take it for granted that the godly should be prosperous under ordinary circumstances. Of course, the problem of the sufferings of the righteous lay heavily on the deeper minds. Still, the prophets teach that, on the whole, God's blessings will come down on the people if they abide in the law of God. The New Testament introduces us to Jesus whose life, outwardly, was the very opposite of success, and to his church, a community of real, or potential martyrs. Jesus was poor, so were his followers. He often



warned against riches, never against poverty. Has then the Christian religion given up to be a factor in making life successful?

No, says the writer, the Christian faith is an essential help in getting health, happiness and an honorable reputation. Clean living and freedom from worry are the products of real faith. The scriptures exalt the body, but not unduly; the Christian spirit keeps the body—but it keeps “the body under.”

In the matter of financial success even, the teachings of Christ equip us with virtues that are indispensable in the contest. It is true the New Testament takes the position that whenever we approach riches we approach danger. On the other hand, the virtues of self-control, temperance, simplicity of life, honesty, industry, etc. which are the results of Christian nurture, lead eventually to the acquisition of wealth. This is so much the case that Calvinism e. g. has been called the father of Capitalism. It was also clearly expressed by Wesley. He advised his followers to practice generous giving as a counter-dose against the hoarding of money. Today the principle of stewardship is receiving a heavy emphasis. We don't condemn money-making. We ask, though, how it is made and what is it used for.

The writer closes with a chapter on the “Cross and Success.” He attempts no deep philosophical interpretation of the Cross. The Cross is a manifestation of divine love and an example for us to follow. No real success without self-sacrifice; no victory in any line of work without paying the price.

The bishop has discussed a question on which many look for enlightenment. He has illuminated his argument with a great deal of pertinent scripture and with other well chosen illustrations. He has constantly kept within the practical sphere, so that his thought can but strike a responsive note with all who seek guidance in life's everyday problems.

**Hinduism Invades America**, by *Wendell Thomas*. The Beacon Press, New York City, 1930, 300 pages.

That we had Hindu “Swamis” and Yogis visiting our shores and teaching, from hotel ballrooms, eastern ways of attaining fulness of life, was well-known. That, however, such teaching has led to organizations, with thousands of members, was not so widely known. This book written by an American who spent several years of study and teaching in India, gives an account of what the author calls the “serious impact on American life of Hindu philosophy and culture, especially in the form of organized life.” The most important Hindu cults in America are, according to the writer, the Vedanta and the Yogoda. Without trying to enter into the difference in the views of these two, it may be said that they agree in their fundamental ideas. Their conception of God is pantheistic. The material world is an illusion. Desire and attachment, however, keep men in bondage to the things of this world. To get free from such desire and to seek God with unremitting zeal is the way to bliss. The way to reach this goal is either the way of renunciation, the ascetic's method; or of devo-

tion, or of knowledge. The way of knowledge is the highest. But there is a lower and higher knowledge; only the higher knowledge (we should call it the metaphysical knowledge) leads to the coveted result. The individual self finds rest by returning to the divine or absolute self, or by becoming absorbed in Brahma, the world spirit. Then the unrest and strife of the individual self has come to an end; the soul loses itself in the ocean from which it came.

From this it can be seen that the nature of Hindu faith is entirely other-worldly. If the highest aim in life is to get free from the things and interests of this life, there can be no desire to change the present world into a better one. On the contrary, the concentration on the highest things, the meditation which leads to the desired self-forgetfulness, would only be disturbed by worrying over the imperfections of the social order or even by helping an unhappy individual. It is true that in America the Hindu societies often adjust themselves to the demands of a people who see in social service almost the whole value of religion. In their homeland, however, and where Hindu faith expresses itself spontaneously, the fakir, who lives in self-inflicted martyrdom, or the mystic seeking rapturous bliss, is supposed to be a higher specimen of humanity than he who loves his neighbor as himself.

Specifically Hindu teachings are the Karma (law of retribution) and the rebirth. This present life is not the only one we have existed in. There were many existences before this and there will be many more. The troubles of one existence may be the punishment of sins committed in a former stage. Hinduism is fertile in philosophical speculation, in systems of theology. It entirely breaks down in ethics. The highest law here that a man is bound to obey, is the law of the caste.

It seems strange that such a religion should find acceptance in practical and this-worldly America. In fact, "where it has found adherents it is among those Americans who were already turned toward Hinduism by American cults of partly Hindu origin (Christian Science, New Thought). This is especially true of Vedanta, while Yogoda relies on two other groups also—liberal Christians and pure converted Yogodans. In the vedanta movement it seems to be mainly the peace that comes from sympathy, tolerance and breadth of view, while in the Yogoda Society it seems to be mainly the practice of body-building and relaxation by means of calisthenics, concentration and meditation."

The author has done a thorough work, his research covers all the ramifications of Hindu propaganda and influence. His position is very sympathetic. We can't share his impression that the impact of Hinduism on American life is so very serious. The defects of Hindu religion are so great and so well known that they should easily outbalance the attractiveness of individual Hindu pleaders and their message. Most of those who are estranged from the Christian churches find in Christian Science or New Thought something more to their taste than the direct importation from a pagan country.



**Sin and the New Psychology**, by *Clifford E. Barbour*, Ph.D.  
The Abingdon Press, 1930—269 pages, \$2.00.

The new psychology this volume deals-with is psychoanalysis, as represented by Freud, Jung, Adler and McDougall. This psychology has discovered a "new continent in the world of man's mind," the unconscious, wherein they have sought to find the source of the purposive strivings of the human soul. In exploring this continent they have enriched language with a number of terms and ideas that constitute a real forward step in psychological development. Of all these ideas the author of this book has selected only one for his special study, that of the "complex." The "complex" in psycho-analysis stands for "sin" in the Christian system. It may seem as though this new science had abrogated the old view entirely and put "complex" into its place. Our writer seeks to show that this is not so. On the contrary, the new psychology and the Christian faith are really pursuing the same aim, and the method of therapy psycho-analysis employs is in principle identical with that used by Christianity for the cure and eradication of sin. Hence it is Dr. Barbour's thesis that recent psychology is a new witness to the truth of Christ.

Psycho-analysis represents the efforts to find the guilty party for our present troubles, a past event responsible for present evils. It finds it in the unconscious, the storehouse for repressions caused by the conflict between instinct and the "ego-ideal." These repressions that have been merged in the unconscious are to be lifted into the conscious. The unconscious is the realm of the instincts and the pleasure principle; the conscious is that of the life plan, the "reality principle." In this process the instincts are not simply to be disregarded or suppressed: they are to be sublimated, their strength is to be used for higher purposes.

The author now proceeds to show along different lines that the general ideas and the therapy of psycho-analysis are an almost perfect parallel to the Christian method of acquiring freedom from sin.

Original sin, the biblical idea of tracing sin back to the beginning of the race, finds its counterpart in psychology's "bias for evil in all men." Psychology also has established man's physical oneness, the unity of the race. Man acts and reacts alike, always and everywhere, regardless of nationality and geography. The psychic material is the heritage of all men. There is a universal human tendency to choose ends of lower moral worth. The first sinner left a primordial tendency for evil. But there is also a spark of goodness, the reality principle, which strives for perfect integration, the "abundant life."

Temptation is the religious word for the unconscious impulse towards evil. When the unconscious impulse for evil presents itself to the conscious mind for expression, conscience stands guard. Conscience to the Christian is not simply the same as herd approval, or the dread of society (Freud); it is not merely based on the traditional ideas of right, for it often acts contrary to these. It is an attribute of the individual; it is the ego-ideal in action using the power of the will

to bring the real self in conformity to the ideal self. The new psychology has instead coined the term "ambi-valence" by which it means the simultaneous emergence of antagonistic emotions into consciousness. This, however, recognizes only the fact of contrasting feelings in the individual, without creating a tribunal with judicial powers as conscience does.

The writer now takes up the different terms of Christian soteriology and matches them with those of the new psychology. Conviction of sin, the sense of guilt, and the inferiority complex; confession and repression (or, rather, the getting rid of the evils of repressed instincts by confession); forgiveness and transference (the patient transfers his faith to the physician—here the resemblance breaks down): sanctification and sublimation.

Thus, the writer finds that step by step the Christian faith and Psycho-analysis go the same way. The only difference is that psychology tries to bring the individual into harmony with himself and his environment, while Christianity brings him into harmony with God. To him, therefore, the new psychology is a new evidence of the truth of Christ. Reviewer can hardly go that far. The new psychology gets along entirely without Christ and without religious faith. Hence it can hardly be said that it is an evidence of the truth of Christ. We would rather say with Dr. Mackintosh, in the Foreword, that "a real and sympathetic comparison can be drawn between the redemptive proposals of the Christian gospel and the process of psycho-analysis." Along this line the similarity is indeed striking and the author deserves praise for the completeness and zeal with which he has performed this task.



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